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# THE GREAT KINSHIP



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# The Great Kinship

*AN ANTHOLOGY OF HUMANITARIAN  
POETRY*

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## PREFACE

HUMANE poetry about animals, that is to say poetry which, consciously or unconsciously, expresses in some degree the feeling of man's sympathetic connection or bond with the other creatures of the earth—whether in the sense of kinship or fellowship or even lordship—has existed for thousands of years, side by side of course with a far greater volume of its opposite, the poetry which treats animals as merely man's antagonists or tools or playthings: poems of hunting, sport, and so forth.

The task of tracing this humane or zoophilist spirit in poetry from the earliest times would be far beyond my power, nor is it necessary to attempt it here, even in outline. But leaving aside altogether the great Eastern literatures, and confining ourselves to the Western world, it may be said at once that on the whole there is very little humanitarian<sup>1</sup> verse of this kind to be found until the last two or three centuries, but that from the eighteenth century onwards there has been a steady and rapid increase. It is pleasant to record that this increase is specially noticeable in English literature, where indeed, so far as *poetry* is concerned, the origins of the latest

<sup>1</sup> It is hardly necessary to point out that I use this word in the modern sense, which has become current mainly through the agency of the Humanitarian League. For definition and discussion see H. S. Salt's essay *Humanitarianism* in Hastings's *Encycl. of Religion and Ethics*, vol. vi, 1913.

phase of the whole tendency are to be sought. No other European literature possesses a body of humanitarian poetry which either, in volume or quality, is comparable with our own.

What survives to us of old Greek literature contains a good deal of interesting speculation and observation on the position and capacity of animals; but classic Greek poetry displays little if any feeling of the essential kinship of man and beast, though the *Anthology* contains some humane pieces, such as that on Alcon's pensioned ox, and the epitaph on a dog quoted in the Notes to this volume. Nor is such a sense much in evidence among the Latin poets, though scattered passages, such as Lucretius's wonderful description of the cow mourning for her calf (which has often served as a model for later writers), or Virgil's pathetic picture of the dying ox, and his famous comparison of Orpheus's grief for the lost Eurydice with that of the nightingale bewailing her stolen nestlings, do indeed attest that among the greater poets compassion and sympathy were by no means lacking. Many of the ideas and arguments regarding animals put forward by the humane philosopher Plutarch in the first century A.D., and later on those of Porphyry and his disciples, certainly anticipated to a remarkable extent various so-called modern theories now very widely held. But the rapid growth of official Christianity to power and dominion, its continual stressing of the future life at the expense of the present one, its arrogant anthropocentrism, and utter lack of interest in the non-human creature,<sup>1</sup> undoubtedly served to render the

<sup>1</sup> "It was this lack of sympathy, surviving in large measure even to modern times, which caused Buddhists to speak of

Middle Ages almost destitute of zoophilist poetry. Save for the numerous legends of saints and hermits, wherein animals in one way or another play an honourable part, very little is, in fact, discoverable; and even here it is fair to point out that the animal often only appears in order to serve as an adjunct to the holiness of the Man.<sup>1</sup> The outstanding and almost isolated figure of St. Francis is of course the great exception; but his example and teaching as regards man's brotherhood with animals seems to have had small influence on the poets of his age, which showed remarkably little interest in

the love-lit law  
Sweet Assisi's seer foresaw.

Indeed it was not until centuries after the death of Francis that the influence of his teaching on this point began to show itself clearly in poetry. We even find one thirteenth-century Christian mystic, the poetess Mechtild of Magdeburg, going so far as to exclude animals and birds from her Earthly Paradise, on the ground that God has reserved it for mankind alone, so that he may dwell there undisturbed.<sup>2</sup> A strange sort of Paradise, truly! It would no doubt be possible to cite a number of poems written during the Middle Ages and the Reformation period which actually do celebrate animals, but it will almost invariably be found that in such poems

Christianism as 'the hell of animal,' says H. S. Salt in his *Humanitarianism*.

<sup>1</sup> Many of the Christian saints were, of course, extremely compassionate to animals. This is specially recorded of Columba, Bernard, and Anselm, for example.

<sup>2</sup> Alice Kemp-Welch, *Of Six Mediæval Women* (London, 1913).



—often charming enough from the purely literary point of view—the animal is only regarded as a pleasant toy; rarely indeed is there much sign of deeper feeling or more penetrating vision. Such eulogies are frequently merely humorous, and the best of them are generally scarcely more than patronizing in tone. Examples of this kind of writing, which I take at random, are the delightful old Irish poem of the Monk and his pet cat,<sup>1</sup> the various pretty Elizabethan songs about pet birds (often modelled on Catullus's lines about Lesbia's sparrow), du Bellay's verses on his pet animals, and Skelton's lengthy and whimsical *Book of Philip Sparrow*:

And many times and ofte  
Between my brostes softe  
It wold lye and rest,  
It was propre and prest.  
And whan I sayd Phyp, Phyp,  
Then he wold leape and skip  
And take me by the lip.  
Alas, it wyf the slo  
That Phillyp is gone me fro.

The kindly Chaucer, too, records of his Prioress in *The Canterbury Tales* that

for to speken of hir conscience,  
She was so charitable and so pitous,  
She wolde wepe if that she sawe a mous  
Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.  
Of smale houndes had she, that she fedde  
With rosted flesh, or milk and wastel-breed.  
But sore weep she if oon of hem were deed,  
Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte;  
And all was conscience and tendre herte.

But the gentle Prioress—a Woman of Sensibility, as an eighteenth-century writer might have called her

<sup>1</sup> Translated by Kuno Meyer in *Selections from Ancient Irish Poetry* (London, 1913).

—was probably a somewhat uncommon type of character in Chaucer's England, as she certainly is in the poetry of his day. The charming epitaphs by Joachim du Bellay on Belaud and "nostre petit Pelotan," his pet cat and dog, are well known, and perhaps still read. "What animal of the sixteenth century lives so clearly as these two?" writes Mr. H. Belloc in *Avril*. "None, I think, except some few in the pictures of the painters of the low countries." The sixteenth century, it is true, produced some great humanitarian prose-writers, such as More and Montaigne. The famous *Essays* of the latter, in particular, contain remarkably just and noble ideas and sentiments on the subject of man's relations with animals; but here again, curiously enough, there is little similar feeling observable in contemporary poetry. Shakespere indeed, who was familiar with Florio's translation of the *Essays*, which was one of the most popular books in England during his later years, refers occasionally to the sufferings of hunted animals,<sup>1</sup> but this is scant evidence that his ideas on the ethics of sport and hunting were at all in advance of his age, as were those of Montaigne and More. It is just possible, however, that we have a slight indication of his personal feeling with regard to experiments on animals in the following passage from *Cymbeline* (Act i, 5), though in view of the context it is perhaps unfair to base any definite conclusion on it, as has sometimes been attempted.

CORNELIUS.

My conscience bids me ask—wherefore you have  
Comman'ded of me these most poisonous compounds,

<sup>1</sup> For example "poor Wat" the hare, in *Venus and Adonis*, and Jacques's wounded stag, "the hairy fool," in *As You Like It*.

QUEEN.

CORNELIUS.

Spenser has two or three noble passages extolling the beauty of the animal creation (such as that in the *Hymne to Heavenly Beautie*), but except for such vague generalizations, which, like "the birds' melodious lays," must be considered merely part of the ordinary stock-in-trade of the poet, the great body of Elizabethan and Jacobean verse is silent on the subject of sympathy with animals. The next age was almost equally barren, though in Marvell, the author of *The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Fawn*, it produced one humane poet of high achievement who was also a true Nature-lover.

he wrote in *Appleton House*, and his early poems, written with infectious zest and loving observation, are full of pleasant pictures of gardens and trees and wild birds. Two or three of his delightful vignettes of birds, indeed, are among the best in all our pre-eighteenth-century verse. One other not uninteresting poem may be mentioned here: the thoughtful, if somewhat stilted eulogy, *The Irish Greyhound*, by Marvell's once extravagantly praised

contemporary Mrs. Katherine Philips, "the matchless Orinda."

Man's guard he would be, not his sport  
Believing he hath ventured for't,  
But yet no blood, or shod or spent,  
Can ever make him insolent.

But, in general the humane temperament found little expression in the poetry of the period; animals were still regarded as merely chattels, and respect for them at best hardly extended beyond acquiescence in the biblical precept, "a righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." It would be difficult, if not impossible, to point to any contemporary protests against the brutal popular sports of bear-baiting, badger-baiting, and the like. A poem of the type of Mr. Galsworthy's *Pitiful* by a writer of that day is quite inconceivable; and the generous if somewhat mild complaint uttered by Marvell's Nymph, "*even* beasts must be with justice slain, else men were made their deodands," is sufficiently strong to be remarkable for the time when it appeared. It is only necessary to compare Shakespeare's descriptions of the hunted hare and the wounded stag, which probably contain the humanest poetry about animals that appeared during the whole Elizabethan period, with Burns's fierce lines *On Seeing a Wounded Hare*, or Wordsworth's *Hart-leap Well*, in order to see what an immensely different conception the lapse of two centuries had brought about. Moreover the difference was as striking in quantity as in quality, for these two poems by the later writers are thoroughly characteristic of their time. Mild sympathy for the ill-used animal is replaced by sympathy *with* the creature, regarded as a sentient fellow-being—a sympathy betokening a wider imagination and clearer understanding.

of humaneness or compassion towards them as a matter of conscience—or common sense.

(ii) Those which express a more general sentiment of the universal kinship of living beings, or in one way or another stress the bond of union between man and the rest of the animal kingdom.

(iii) Those which though not strictly to be classed in either of the foregoing categories, yet tend to evoke in the reader emotions or ideas favourable to the growth of humane feeling: in short, poems which create a humanitarian atmosphere.

Some poems, naturally, combine the qualities of the first two classes, while others depend partly on the point of view from which they are regarded for the manner and extent of their influence on the reader.

As we should expect, many of the most beautiful pieces in this book, and indeed some of the most beautiful in English literature, belong to the third of the above groups. This would include poems of the type of Shelley's *Sky-lark*, Swinburne's *To a Seamew*, or Walter de la Mare's *The Linnet*, which, to one who knows and loves wild linnets, is almost as delightful as the bird's own sweet warble which it so exquisitely suggests.

No apology need be made if the number of poems dealing with birds—wild or caged—seems disproportionate to some readers. For birds, being creatures intensely mobile, bright, musical, sensitive, and æsthetic, have naturally always attracted the attention of poets, and served them as symbols in countless works of imagination; and even of St. Francis, who loved all animals, it is recorded that "he loved above all others a certain little bird called the lark." This attraction is more marked

than ever at the present time, when the spread of a finer and deeper appreciation and understanding of wild birds rouses in us the faint hope that the iniquitous custom of keeping them caged as "pets" will one day disappear altogether. It is certain that if it does, poetry will have played a large part in its extinction.

In such a collection as this, extending over several centuries and devoted to a special subject, it cannot of course for a moment be contended that anything like an equal level is maintained; and since this book is intended mainly to show the growth of humanitarian feeling in man's relations with the other animals, as mirrored in poetry, I have not hesitated to include some poems, especially translations, less on the ground of their intrinsic merit than on account of the historical or biographical interest attaching to them.

I have made it a rule to print only complete poems, believing that the admission of "extracts" in such a book inevitably entails a distinct sacrifice of artistic unity, and in some cases even tends to obscure the truth. This method has no doubt certain very obvious disadvantages—rendering impossible, for instance, adequate representation of Shelley, or quotation of the magnificent humanitarian passages from Mr. Wilfrid Blunt's *Satan Absolved*. But it possesses at any rate one most important advantage: it avoids that unpleasant calendar-like scrappiness which is the bane of so many anthologies. Those who may feel that they are thus, so to speak, defrauded of their rights, will, however, find in the notes at the end of the volume a considerable number of extracts, both from the other writings of poets who are in-

adequately represented in the collection, and from the works of some poets who do not appear there at all; and in these notes I have also sought to draw attention, sometimes by means of quotation, sometimes by references only, to various more or less parallel passages of humanitarian poetry, foreign as well as English.

But the anthologist who should hope to satisfy all his readers would quickly find himself in the position of Æsop's miller: in the end he must, even be satisfied to please himself!

\* \* \* \*

I wish to express my heartiest thanks to the various living writers who have kindly allowed me to reprint here selections from their published work. I am indebted to Mr. Jethro Bithell for the excellent translation of Jammes's *My Dog*, specially made for this collection; to Mr. Alfred Forman, the Hon. Secretary of the Villon Society, for a privately printed translation by the late John Payne; and to Miss Stella Browne for a hitherto unprinted translation from Haraucourt, as well as for much assistance in other ways. It would be almost superfluous to acknowledge my obligations to my friend Mr. H. S. Salt, were it not that this book may conceivably come into the hands of readers who are unacquainted with his work.<sup>1</sup> To the various friends and correspondents (not forgetting the printers' reader) who have helped me in one way or another, I must offer my thanks collectively.

My grateful acknowledgements are due to the

<sup>1</sup> See especially *Animals' Rights* (London, 1915) and *Kith and Kin: Poems of Animal Life* (London, 1901).

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I offer my apologies to any one whose rights I have unwittingly infringed or to whom I have omitted due acknowledgement.

# POEMS



# Andrew Marvell

1621—1633.

## THE NYMPH COMPLAINING FOR THE DEATH OF HER FAWN

**T**HE wanton troopers riding by  
Have shot my fawn, and it will die.  
Ungentle men ! They cannot thrive  
Who killed thee. Thou ne'er didst alive  
Them any harm, alas ! nor could  
Thy death yet do them any good.  
I'm sure I never wished them ill ;  
Nor do I for all this nor will :  
But if my simple prayers may yet  
Prevail with heaven to forget  
Thy murder, I will join my tears  
Rather than fail. But, O my fears !  
It cannot die so ! Heaven's king  
Keeps register of every thing,  
And nothing may we use in vain ;  
Ev'n beasts must be with justice slain,  
Else men are made their deodands.  
Though they should wash their guilty hands  
In this warm life-blood which doth part  
From thine, and wound me to the heart,  
Yet could they not be clean ; their stain  
Is dyed in such a purple grain.  
There is not such another in  
The world to offer for their sin.  
Unconstant Sylvio, when yet

I had not found him counterfeit,  
One morning (I remember well),  
Tied in this silver chain and bell,  
Gave it to me : nay, and I know  
What he said then, I'm sure I do :  
Said he, " Look how your huntsman here  
Hath taught a fawn to hunt his deer."  
But Sylvio soon had me beguiled ;  
This waxed tame, while he grew wild,  
And quite regardless of my smart,  
Left me his fawn, but took his heart.  
Thenceforth I set myself to play  
My solitary time away  
With this ; and, very well content  
Could so mine idle life have spent.  
For it was full of sport, and light  
Of foot and heart, and did invite  
Me to its game : it seemed to bless  
Itself in me ; how could I less  
Than love it ? O, I cannot be  
Unkind to a beast that loveth me.  
Had it lived long I do not know  
Whether it too might have done so  
As Sylvio did ; his gifts might be  
Perhaps as false, or more, than he ;  
But I am sure, for aught that I  
Could in so short a time espy,  
Thy love was far more better than  
The love of false and cruel men.  
With sweetest milk and sugar first  
I it at my own fingers nursed ;  
And as it grew, so every day  
It waxed more white and sweet than they.  
It had so sweet a breath ! And oft

I blushed to see its foot more soft  
And white, shall I say than my hand ?  
Nay, any lady's of the land.  
It is a wondrous thing how fleet  
'Twas on those little silver feet ;  
With what a pretty skipping grace  
It oft would challenge me the race ;  
And when't had left me far away  
'Twould stay, and run again, and stay  
For it was nimbler much than hinds  
And trod as if on the four winds.  
I have a garden of my own,  
But so with roses overgrown,  
And lilies, that you would it guess  
To be a little wilderness ;  
And all the spring-time of the year  
It only lovèd to be there.  
Among the beds of lilies I  
Have sought it oft, where it should lie,  
Yet could not, till itself would rise,  
Find it, although before mine eyes ;  
For in the flaxen lilies' shade  
It like a bank of lilies laid.  
Upon the roses it would feed  
Until its lips ev'n seemed to bleed,  
And then to me 'twould boldly trip,  
And print those roses on my lip.  
But all its chief delight was still  
On roses thus itself to fill,  
And its pure virgin limbs to fold  
In whitest sheets of lilies cold.  
Had it lived long it would have been  
Lilies without, roses within.  
O help, O help ! I see it faint

And die as calmly as a saint !  
See how it weeps ! The tears do come  
Sad, slowly-dropping like a gum.  
So weeps the wounded balsam ; so  
The holy frankincense doth flow ;  
The brotherless Heliades  
Melt in such amber tears as these.  
I in a golden vial will  
Keep these two crystal tears, and fill  
It till it do o'erflow with mine,  
Then place it in Diana's shrine.  
Now my sweet fawn is vanished to  
Whither the swans and turtles go ;  
In fair Elysium to endure,  
With milk-white lambs, and ermines pure.  
O do not run too fast : for I  
Will but bespeak thy grave and die.  
First, my unhappy statue shall  
Be cut in marble : and withal  
Let it be weeping too ; but there  
The engraver sure his art may spare ;  
For I so truly thee bemoan,  
That I shall weep though I be stone,  
Until my tears, still dropping, wear  
My breast, themselves engraving there  
There at my feet shalt thou be laid,  
Of purest alabaster made ;  
For I would have thine image be  
White as I can, though not as thee.

# Christopher Smart

1722—1770.

## ON AN EAGLE

CONFINED IN A COLLEGE COURT

**I**MPERIAL bird, who wont to soar  
High o'er the rolling cloud  
Where Hyperborean mountains hoar  
Their heads in ether shroud—  
Thou servant of almighty Jove,  
Who, free and swift as thought, could'st rove  
To the bleak north's extremest goal;  
Thou who magnanimous could'st bear  
The sovereign thunderer's arms in air,  
And shake thy native pole!

Oh cruel fate! what barbarous hand,  
What more than Gothic ire,  
At some fierce tyrant's dread command,  
• To check thy daring fire,  
Has placed thee in this servile cell,  
Where discipline and dulness dwell,  
Where genius ne'er was seen to roam;  
Where every selfish soul's at rest,  
Nor ever quits the carnal breast,  
But lurks and sneaks at home.

Tho' dimmed thine eye, and clipt thy wing,  
So grov'ling, once so great,  
The grief-inspired Muse shall sing  
In tenderest lays thy fate.



What time by thee Scholastic Pride  
Takes his precise, pedantic stride,  
Nor on thy misery casts a care,  
The stream of love ne'er from his heart  
Flows out, to act fair pity's part,  
But stinks and stagnates there.

Yet useful still, hold to the throng—  
Hold the reflecting glass—  
That not untutored at thy wrong  
The passenger may pass :  
Thou type of wit and sense confined,  
Cramped by the oppressors of the mind,  
Who study downward on the ground ;  
Type of the fall of Greece and Rome—  
While more than mathematic gloom  
Envelops all around.

# William Cowper

1731—1800.

## EPITAPH ON A HARE

**H**ERE lies, whom hound did ne'er pursue,  
Nor swifter greyhound follow,  
Whose foot ne'er tainted morning dew,  
Nor ear heard huntsman's halloo ;

Old Tiney, surliest of his kind,  
Who, nursed with tender care,  
And to domestic bounds confined,  
Was still a wild Jack-hare.

Though duly from my hand he took  
His pittance every night,  
He did it with a jealous look,  
And, when he could, would bite.

His diet was of wheaten bread,  
And milk, and oats, and straw ;  
Thistles, or, lettuces instead,  
With sand to scour his maw.

On twigs of hawthorn he regaled,  
On pippins' russet peel,  
And, when his juicy salads failed,  
Sliced carrot pleased him well.

A Turkey carpet was his lawn,  
Whereon he loved to bound,  
To skip and gambol like a fawn,  
And swing his rump around.

His frisking was at evening hours,  
For then he lost his fear,  
But most, before approaching showers,  
Or when a storm drew near.

Eight years and five round-rolling moons  
He thus saw steal away,  
Dozing out all his idle noons,  
And every night at play.

I kept him for his humour's sake,  
For he would oft beguile  
My heart of thoughts that made it ache,  
And force me to a smile.

But now beneath his walnut shade  
He finds his long last home,  
And waits, in snug concealment laid,  
Till gentler Puss shall come.

He, still more agèd, feels the shocks  
From which no care can save,  
And, partner once of Tiney's box,  
Must soon partake his grave.

# William Cowper

## ON A GOLDFINCH STARVED TO DEATH IN HIS CAGE

**T**IME was when I was free as air,  
The thistle's downy seed my fare,  
My drink the morning dew ;  
I perched at will on every spray,  
My form genteel, my plumage gay,  
My strains for ever new.

But gaudy plumage, sprightly strain,  
And form genteel, were all in vain,  
And of a transient date ;  
For, caught and caged, and starved to death,  
In dying sighs my little breath  
Soon passed the wiry grate.

Thanks, gentle swain, for all my woes,  
And thanks for this effectual close  
And cure of every ill !  
More cruelty could none express :  
And I, if you had shown me less,  
Had been your prisoner still.

# William Blake

1757—1827.

## AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE

**T**O see a World in a grain of sand,  
And a Heaven in a wild flower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand.  
And Eternity in an hour.  
A robin redbreast in a cage  
Puts all Heaven in a rage.  
A dove-house fill'd with doves and pigeons  
Shudders Hell thro' all its regions.  
A dog starv'd at his master's gate  
Predicts the ruin of the State.  
A horse misus'd upon the road  
Calls to Heaven for human blood.  
Each outcry of the hunted hare  
A fibre from the brain does tear.  
A skylark wounded in the wing,  
A cherubin does cease to sing.  
The game-cock clapt and arm'd for fight  
Does the rising sun affright.  
Every wolf's and lion's howl  
Raises from Hell a Human soul.  
The wild deer, wandering here and there,  
Keeps the Human soul from care.  
The lamb misus'd breeds public strife,  
And yet forgives the butcher's knife.  
He who shall hurt the little wren  
Shall never be belov'd by men.

He who the ox to wrath has mov'd  
Shall never be by woman lov'd.  
The wanton boy that kills the fly  
Shall feel the spider's enmity.  
He who torments the chafer's sprite  
Weaves a bower in endless night.  
The caterpillar on the leaf,  
Repeats to thee thy mother's grief.  
Kill not the moth nor butterfly  
For the Last Judgement draweth nigh.  
He who shall train the horse to war  
Shall never pass the Polar Bar.  
The beggar's dog and widow's cat,  
Feed them and thou wilt grow fat.  
The bleat, the bark, bellow and roar  
Are waves that beat on Heaven's shore.

# William Blake

## NIGHT

**T**HE sun descending in the west,  
The evening star does shine ;  
The birds are silent in their nest,  
And I must seek for mine.  
The moon, like a flower  
In heaven's high bower,  
With silent delight  
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell, green fields and happy groves  
Where flocks have took delight.  
Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves  
The feet of angels bright ;  
Unseen, they pour blessing,  
And joy without ceasing,  
On each bud and blossom,  
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest  
Where birds are cover'd warm ;  
They visit caves of every beast,  
To keep them all from harm.  
If they see any weeping  
That should have been sleeping,  
They pour sleep on their head,  
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey,  
They pitying stand and weep ;  
Seeking to drive their thirst away,  
And keep them from the sheep.  
But if they rush dreadful,  
The angels, most heedful,  
Receive each mild spirit,  
New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes  
Shall flow with tears of gold,  
And pitying the tender cries,  
And walking round the fold,  
Saying, " Wrath by His meekness,  
And, by His health, sickness,  
Is driven away  
From our immortal day.

" And now beside thee, bleating lamb,  
I can lie down and sleep ;  
Or think on Him who bore thy name,  
Graze after thee, and weep.  
For wash'd in life's river,  
My bright mane for ever  
Shall shine like the gold,  
As I guard o'er the fold."



# Friedrich Schiller

1759—1805.

## THE ALPINE HUNTER

**W**ILT thou leave the lambs untended?  
See how happily they play  
By the brook, and crop the blended  
Grasses starred with blossoms gay.  
“Mother, mother, let me go  
To the mountains with my bow!”

From the dells the cattle calling,  
Sound upon thy merry horn.  
Hark, the cow-bell's echo falling  
Fainter o'er the forest borne.  
“Mother, mother, let me go  
Hunting with my trusty bow!”

Stay and tend the simple flowers  
Blooming in our garden here.  
On the heights no fragrant bowers  
Greet thee—all is wild and drear:  
“Nay, the flowers alone can grow;  
Mother, mother, let me go!”

And he dashes off unheeding,  
Blindly bent upon the chase,  
Ever madly onwards speeding  
Up the gloomy mountain-face;  
While before him like the wind  
Darts the trembling chamois-hind.

Up the barren precipices,  
Light of foot she finds a way,  
Over fathomless abysses  
Leaping—nought her flight can stay ;  
Hard upon her track the foe  
Follows with his deadly bow.

Till at last she pauses, driven  
To the mountain's topmost ridge,  
Where a monstrous gorge is riven  
That no leap may hope to bridge ;  
There she clings, with cruel death  
Close behind, the gulf beneath.

Then she turns on him with yearning  
Mutely-pleading eyes of woe :  
Vainly, for all pity spurning  
Even now he draws his bow—  
When from out the gulf, behold,  
Steps the Mountain Spirit old.

And his mighty hand extending  
O'er the hunter's destined prize,  
" Even unto me ascending  
Bring'st thou pain and death ? " he cries.  
" Mother Earth has room for all :  
Must my flock before thee fall ? "

1804.

# Robert Burns

1759—1796.

## ON SEEING A WOUNDED HARE LIMP BY ME WHICH A FELLOW HAD JUST SHOT AT

**I**NHUMAN man ! curse on thy barb'rous art  
And 'blasted be thy murder-aiming eye ;  
May never pity soothe thee with a sigh,  
Nor ever pleasure glad thy cruel heart !

Go, live, poor wanderer of the wood and field,  
The bitter little that of life remains ;  
No more the thickening brakes and verdant plains  
To thee shall home, or food, or pastime yield.

Seek, mangled wretch, some place of wonted rest,  
No more of rest, but now thy dying bed !  
The sheltering rushes whistling o'er thy head,  
The cold earth with thy bloody bosom prest.

Perhaps a mother's anguish adds its woe ;  
The playful pair crowd fondly by thy side  
Ah, helpless nurslings ! who will now provide  
That life a mother only can bestow ?

Oft as by winding Nith, I, musing, wait  
The sober eve, or hail the cheerful dawn,  
I'll miss thee sporting o'er the dewy lawn,  
And curse the ruffian's aim, and mourn thy hapless  
fate.

# Robert Burns

## TO A MOUSE

ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST WITH THE PLOUGH

**W**EE, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie !  
O what a panic's in thy breastie !  
Thou needna start awa sae hasty,  
Wi' bickèring brattle !  
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,  
Wi' murd'ring pattle.

I'm truly sorry man's dominion  
Has broken Nature's social union,  
An' justifies that ill opinion  
Which makes thee startle  
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,  
An' fellow-mortal.

I doubtna, whiles, but thou mayst thieve ;  
What then ? poor beastie, thou maun live !  
A daimen-icker in a thrave  
'S a sma' request :  
I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,  
And never miss't !

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin !  
It's silly wa's the win's are strewin' !  
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,  
O' foggage green !  
An' bleak December's winds ensuin'  
Baith snell and keen !

Thou saw the fields laid bare and waste,  
An' weary winter comin' fast,  
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,  
    Thou thought to dwell,  
Till crash ! the cruel coulter past  
    Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves and stibble,  
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble !  
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,  
    But house or hald, .  
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,  
    And cranreuch cauld !

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,  
In proving foresight may be vain :  
The best laid schemes o' mice and men  
    Gang aft a-gley, .  
And lea'e us nought but grief and pain,  
    For promis'd joy.

Still thou art blest compar'd wi' me :  
The present only toucheth thee :  
But och ! I backward cast my e'e,  
    On prospects drear !  
And forward, though I canna see,  
    I guess an' fear.

# Robert Burns

## ON SCARING SOME WATERFOWL IN LOCH TURIT

A WILD SCENE AMID THE HILLS OF OCHERTYRE

**W**HYY, ye tenants of the lake,  
For me your watery haunt forsake ?  
Tell me, fellow-creatures, why  
At my presence thus you fly ?  
Why disturb your social joys,  
Parent, filial, kindred ties ?—  
Common friend to you and me,  
Nature's gifts to all are free :  
Peaceful keep your dimpling wave,  
Busy feed, or wanton lave ;  
Or, beneath the sheltering rock,  
Bide the surging billow's shock.

Conscious, blushing for our race  
Soon, too soon, your fears I trace.  
Man, your proud, usurping foe,  
Would be lord of all below :  
Plumes himself in Freedom's pride,  
Tyrant stern to all beside.

The eagle, from the cliffy brow,  
Marking you his prey below,  
In his breast no pity dwells,

Strong necessity compels ;  
But man to whom alone is given  
A ray direct from pitying Heaven,  
Glories in his heart humane—  
And creatures for his pleasure slain.

In these savage, liquid plains,  
Only known to wandering swains,  
Where the mossy riv'let strays  
Far from human haunts and ways,  
All on Nature you depend,  
And life's poor season peaceful spend:

Or, if man's superior might  
Dare invade your native right,  
On the lofty ether borne,  
Man with all his powers you scorn ;  
Swiftly seek, on clanging wings,  
Other lakes and other springs ;  
And the foe you cannot brave,  
Scorn at least to be his slave.

# Robert Burns

## THE 'AULD FARMER'S NEW-YEAR MORNING SALUTATION TO HIS AULD MARE MAGGIE,

ON GIVING HER THE ACCUSTOMED RIP OF CORN TO  
HANSEL IN THE NEW-YEAR

**A** GUID New-Year I wish thee, Maggie!  
Hae, there's a rip to thy auld baggie:  
Though thou's howe-backit now and knaggie,  
I've seen the day  
Thou could hae gane like ony staggie  
Out-owre the lay.

Though now thou's dowie, stiff, an' crazy,  
An' thy auld hide's as white's a daisy,  
I've seen thee dappl't, sleek, and glaizie,  
A bonny gray:  
He should been tight that daur't to raize thee,  
Ance in a day.

Thou ance was i' the foremost rank,  
A filly buirdly, steeve, an' swank,  
An' set weel down a shapely shank,  
As e'er tread yird,  
An' could hae flown out-owre a stank  
Like ony bird.

It's now some nine-an'-twenty year  
Sin' thou was my guid father's mere;



He gied me thee, o' tocher clear,  
    An fifty mark ;  
Though it was sma', 'twas weel-won gear  
    An' thou was stark.

When first I gaed to woo my Jenny,  
Ye then, was trottin' wi' your minnie :  
Though ye was trickie, slee, and funnie,  
    Ye ne'er was donsie ;  
But hamely, tawie, quiet an' cannie,  
    An' unco sonsie.

That day ye pranced wi' muckle pride,  
When ye bure hame my bonnie bride :  
An' sweet an' gracefu' she did ride,  
    Wi' maiden air !  
Kyle Stewart I could braggèd wide  
    For sic a pair.

Though now ye dow but hoyte an' hobble,  
An' wintle like a saumont coble,  
That day ye was a jinker noble,  
    For heels an' win' !  
An' ran them till they a' did wauble  
    Far, far behin'.

When thou and I were young and skeigh,  
An, stable meals at fairs were dreigh,  
How thou would prance, an' snere, an' skreigh,  
    An' tak' the road !  
Town's-bodies ran, an' stodd abeigh,  
    An' ca't thee mad.

When thou was corn't an' I was mellow  
We took the road aye like a swallow :

At brooses thou had ne'er a fellow  
For pith and speed,  
But every tail thou pay't them hollow,  
Where'er thou gaed.

The sma', droop-rumpl't, hunter cattle  
Might aiblins waur't thee' for a brattle;  
But sax Scotch miles thou try't their mettle,  
An' gar't them whaizle :  
Nae whip nor spur, but just a wattle  
O' saugh or hazel.

Thou was a noble fittie-lan'  
As e'er in tug or tow was drawn!  
Aft thee an' I, in aught hours gaun,  
In guid March weather,  
Hae turned sax rood beside our han',  
For days thegither.

Thou never braindg't, an' fetch't, an' fliskit,  
But thy auld tail thou wad hae whiskit,  
An' spread abreed thy weel-filled briskit,  
Wi' pith and pow'r,  
Till spritty knowes wad rair't and risket,  
An' slypet owre.

When frosts lay lang an' snaws were deep,  
An' threatened labour back to keep,  
I gied thy cog a wee bit heap  
Aboon the timmer;  
I kenned my Maggie wad na sleep  
For that or simmer.

In cart or car thou never restit;  
The steyst brae thou wad hae fac't it;

Thou never lap, an' sten't, an' breastit,  
Then stood to blaw;  
But just thy step a wee thing hastit,  
Thou snoov't awa'.

My pleugh is now thy bairn-time a';  
Four gallant brutes as e'er did draw;  
Forbye'sax mae I've sell't awa,  
That thou hast nurst:  
They drew me thretteen pund an' twa,  
The vera warst.

Monie a sair daurk we twa hae wrought,  
An' wi' the weary warl' fought!  
An' monie an anxious day I thought  
We wad be beat!  
Yet here to crazy age we're brought  
Wi' something yet.

And think na, my auld, trusty servan',  
That now perhaps thou's less deservin',  
An' thy auld days may end in starvin'  
For my last fou,  
A heapit stimpart, I'll reserve ane  
Laid by for you.

We've worn to crazy years thegither;  
We'll toyte about wi' ane anither;  
Wi' tentie care I'll slit thy tethèr  
To some hained rig,  
Whare ye may nobly rax your leather,  
Wi' sma fatigue.

# William Wordsworth

1770—1850.

## THE GREEN LINNET

**B**ENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed  
Their snow-white blossoms on my head,  
With brightest sunshine round me spread  
Of spring's unclouded weather,  
In this sequestered nook how sweet  
To sit upon my orchard seat,  
And birds and flowers once more to greet,  
My last year's friends together!

One have I marked, the happiest guest  
In all this covert of the blest :  
Hail to Thee, far above the rest  
In joy of voice and pinion !  
Thou, Linnet, in thy green array,  
Presiding Spirit here to-day,  
Dost lead the revels of the May ;  
And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers  
Make all one band of paramours,  
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,  
Art sole in thy employment ;  
A life, a Presence like the air,  
Scattering thy gladness without care,  
Too blest with any one to pair ;  
Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,  
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,  
Behold him perched in ecstasies,  
    Yet seeming still to hover ;  
There ! where the flutter of his wings  
Upon his back and body flings  
Shadows and sunny glimmerings  
    That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,  
A Brother of the dancing leaves ;  
Then flits, and from the cottage eaves  
    Pours forth his song in gushes ;  
As if by that exulting strain  
He mocked and treated with disdain  
The voiceless Form he chose to feign  
    While fluttering in the bushes.

# William Wordsworth

## TO A BUTTERFLY

I'VE watched you now full half-an-hour,  
Self-poised upon that yellow flower ;  
And little Butterfly ! indeed  
I know not if you sleep or feed.  
How motionless !—not frozen seas  
More motionless ! and then  
What joy awaits you, when the breeze  
Hath found you out among the trees,  
And calls you forth again !

This plot of orchard-ground is ours ;  
My trees they are, my Sister's flowers ;  
Here rest your wings when they are weary,  
Here lodge as in a sanctuary !  
Come often to us, fear no wrong ;  
Sit near us on the bough !  
We'll talk of sunshine and of song,  
And summer days, when we were young ;  
Sweet childish days, that were as long  
As twenty days are now.

1802.

# William Wordsworth

## A WREN'S NEST

**A**MONG the dwellings framed by birds  
In field or forest with nice care,  
Is none that with the little Wren's  
In snugness may compare.

No door the tenement requires,  
And seldom needs a laboured roof;  
Yet is it to the fiercest sun  
Impervious, and storm-proof.

So warm, so beautiful withal,  
In perfect fitness for its aim,  
That to the Kind by special grace  
Their instinct surely came.

And when for their abodes they seek  
An opportune recess,  
The hermit has no finer eye  
For shadowy quietness.

These find, 'mid ivied abbey-walls,  
A canopy in some still nook;  
Others are pent-housed by a brae  
That overhangs a brook.

There to the brooding bird her mate  
Warbles by fits his low clear song ;  
And by the busy streamlet both  
Are sung to all day long.

Or in sequestered lanes they build,  
Where, till the flitting bird's return,  
Her eggs within the nest repose,  
Like relics in 'an urn.

But still, where, general choice is good,  
- There is a better and a best ;  
And, among fairest objects, some  
Are fairer than the rest ;

This, one of those small builders proved  
In a green covert, where, from out  
The forehead of a pollard oak,  
The leafy antlers sprout ;

For She who planned the mossy lodge,  
Mistrusting her evasive skill,  
Had to a Primrose looked for aid  
Her wishes to fulfil.

High on the trunk's projecting brow,  
And fixed an infant's span above  
The budding flowers, peeped forth the nest  
The prettiest of the grove !

The treasure proudly did I show  
To some whose minds without disdain  
Can turn to little things ; but once  
Looked up for it in vain :



'Tis gone—a ruthless spoiler's prey,  
Who heeds not beauty, love, or song,  
'Tis gone ! (so seemed it) and we grieved  
Indignant at the wrong.

Just three days after, passing by  
In clearer light the moss-built cell  
I saw, espied its shaded mouth ;  
And felt that all was well.

The Primrose for a veil had spread  
The largest of her upright leaves ;  
And thus, for purposes benign,  
A simple flower deceives.

Concealed from friends who might disturb  
Thy quiet with no ill intent,  
Secure from evil eyes and hands  
On barbarous plunder bent,

Rest, Mother-bird ! and when thy young  
Take flight, and thou art free to roam,  
When withered is the guardian Flower,  
And empty thy late home,

Think how ye prospered, thou and thine,  
Amid the unviolated grove,  
Housed near the growing Primrose-tuft  
In foresight, or in love.

1833.

# William Wordsworth

## HART-LEAP WELL

**T**HE Knight had ridden down from Wensley  
Moor

With the slow motion of a summer's cloud,  
And now, as he approached a vassal's door,  
"Bring forth another horse!"—he cried aloud.

"Another horse!"—that shout the vassal heard  
And saddled his best Steed, a comely grey;  
Sir Walter mounted him; he was the third  
Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's eyes;  
The horse and horseman are a happy pair;  
But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,  
There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's Hall,  
That as they galloped made the echoes roar;  
But horse and man, are vanished, one and all;  
Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,  
Calls to the few tired dogs that yet remain:  
Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of their kind,  
Follow, and up the weary mountain strain.

The Knight hallooed, he cheered and chid them on  
With suppliant gestures and upbraidings stern ;  
But breath and eyesight fail ; and, one by one,  
The dogs are stretched among the mountain fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the race ?  
The bugles that so cheerfully were blown ?  
—This chase it looks not like an earthly chase ;  
Sir Walter and the Hart are left alone.

The poor Hart toils along the mountain-side ;  
I will not stop to tell how far he fled,  
Nor will I mention by what death he died ;  
But now the Knight beholds him lying dead.

Dismounting, then, he leaned against a thorn ;  
He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor boy :  
He neither cracked his whip, nor blew his horn,  
But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter leaned,  
Stood his dumb partner in this glorious feat ;  
Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned ;  
And white with foam as if with cleaving sleet.

Upon his side the Hart was lying stretched :  
His nostril touched a spring beneath a hill,  
And with the last deep groan his breath had fetched  
The waters of the spring were trembling still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest,  
(Never had living man such joyful lot !)  
Sir Walter walked all round, north, south, and west,  
And gazed and gazed upon that darling spot.

And climbing up the hill—(it was at least  
Four roods of sheer ascent) Sir Walter found  
Three several hoof-marks which the hunted Beast  
Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, “ Till now  
Such sight was never seen by human eyes :  
Three leaps have borne him from this lofty brow,  
Down to the very fountain where he lies.

“ I’ll build a pleasure-house upon this spot,  
And a small arbour, made for rural joy ;  
’Twill be the traveller’s shed, the pilgrim’s cot,  
A place of love for damsels that are coy.

“ A cunning artist will I have to frame  
A basin for that fountain in the dell !  
And they who do make mention of the same,  
From this day forth, shall call it HART-LEAP WELL.

“ And, gallant Stag ! to make thy praises known,  
Another monument shall here be raised ;  
Three several pillars, each a rough-hewn stone,  
And planted where thy hoofs the turf have grazed.

“ And, in the summer-time when days are long,  
I will come hither with my Paramour ;  
And with the dancers and the minstrel’s song  
We will make merry in that pleasant bower.

“ Till the foundations of the mountains fail  
My mansion with its arbour shall endure ;—  
The joy of them who till the fields of Swale,  
And them who dwell among the woods of Ure ! ”

Then home he went, and left the Hart, stone-dead,  
With breathless nostrils stretched above the spring.  
—Soon did the Knight perform what he had said;  
And far and wide the fame thereof did ring.

Ere thrice the Moon into her port had steered,  
A cup of stone received the living well;  
Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter reared,  
And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And near the fountain, flowers of stature tall  
With trailing plants and trees were intertwined,—  
Which soon composed a little sylvan hall,  
A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer days were long,  
Sir Walter led his wondering Paramour;  
And with the dancers and the minstrel's song  
Made merriment within that pleasant bower.

The Knight, Sir Walter, died in course of time,  
And his bones lie in his paternal vale.—  
But there is matter for a second rhyme,  
And I to this would add another tale.

## PART SECOND

The moving accident is not my trade;  
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts :  
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,  
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,  
It chanced that I saw standing in a dell  
Three aspens at three corners of a square ;  
And one, not four yards distant, near a well.

What this imported I could, ill divine :  
And, pulling now the rein my horse to stop,  
I saw three pillars standing in a line,—  
The last stone-pillar on a dark hill-top..

The trees were grey, with neither arms nor head ;  
Half wasted the square mound of tawny green ;  
So that you just might say, as then I said,  
“ Here in old time the hand of man hath been.”

I looked upon the hill both far and near,  
More doleful place did never eye survey ;  
It seemed as if the spring-time came not here,  
And Nature here was willing to decay.

I stood in various thoughts and fancies lost,  
When one, who was in shepherd's garb attired,  
Came up the hollow :—him did I accost,  
And what this place might be I then inquired.

The Shepherd stopped, and that same story told  
Which in my former rhyme I have rehearsed.  
“ A jolly place,” said he, “ in times of old !  
But something ails it now ; the spot is curst.

“ You see these lifeless stumps of aspen wood—  
Some say that they are beeches, others elms—  
These were the bower ; and here a mansion stood,  
The finest palace of a hundred realms !

“The arbour does its own condition tell ;  
You see the stones, the fountain, and the stream ;  
But as to the great Lodge ! you might as well  
Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

“There’s neither dog nor heifer, horse nor sheep,  
Will wet his lips within that cup of stone ;  
And oftentimes when all are fast asleep,  
This water doth send forth a dolorous groan.

“Some say that here a murder has been done,  
And blood cries out for blood : but, for my part,  
I’ve guessed, when I’ve been sitting in the sun,  
That it was all for that unhappy Hart.

“What thoughts must through the creature’s brain  
have passed !  
Even from the topmost stone, upon the steep,  
Are but three bounds—and loek, Sir, at this last—  
O Master ! it has been a cruel leap.

“For thirteen hours he ran a desperate race ;  
And in my simple mind we cannot tell  
What cause the Hart might have to love this place,  
And come and make his deathbed near the well.

“Here on the grass perhaps asleep he sank,  
Lulled by the fountain in the summer tide ;  
This water was perhaps the first he drank  
When he had wandered from his mother’s side.

“In April here beneath the flowering thorn  
He heard the birds their morning carols sing ;  
And he, perhaps, for aught we know, was born  
Not half a furlong from that self-same spring.

“ Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant shade ;  
The sun on drearier hollow never shone ;  
So will it be, as I have often said,  
Till trees, and stones, and fountain, all are gone.”

“ Grey-headed Shepherd, thou hast spoken well ;  
Small difference lies between thy creed and mine :  
This Beast not unobserved by Nature fell ;  
His death was mourned by sympathy divine.

“ The Being, that is in the clouds and air,  
That is in the green leaves among the groves,  
Maintains a deep and reverential care  
For the unoffending creatures whom he loves.

“ The pleasure-house is dust :—behind, before,  
This is no common waste, no common gloom ;  
But Nature, in due course of time, once more  
Shall here put on her beauty and her bloom.

“ She lets these objects to a slow decay  
That what we are, and have been, may be known ;  
But at the coming of the milder day,  
These monuments shall all be overgrown.

“ One lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,  
Taught both by what she shows, and what conceals ;  
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride  
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels.”

1800.



# William Wordsworth

## FIDELITY

**A** BARKING sound the Shepherd hears,  
A cry as of a dog or fox ;  
He halts—and searches with his eyes  
Among the scattered rocks :  
And now at distance can discern  
A stirring in a brake of fern ;  
And instantly a dog is seen,  
Glancing through that covert green.

The Dog is not of mountain breed ;  
Its motions, too, are wild and shy ;  
With something, as the Shepherd thinks,  
Unusual in its cry :  
Nor is there anyone in sight  
All round, in hollow or on height ;  
Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear ;  
What is the creature doing here ?

It was a cove, a huge recess,  
That keeps, till June, December's snow ;  
A lofty precipice in front,  
A silent tarn below !  
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn  
Remote from public road or dwelling,  
Pathway, or cultivated land ;  
From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish  
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer ;  
The crags repeat the raven's croak,  
In symphony austere ;  
Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—  
And mists that spread the flying shroud ;  
And sunbeams, and the sounding blast,  
That if it could, would hurry past ;  
But that enormous barrier holds it fast.

Not free from boding thoughts, a while  
The Shepherd stood ; then makes his way  
O'er rocks and stones, following the Dog  
As quickly as he may ;  
Nor far had gone before he found  
A human skeleton on the ground ;  
The appalled Discoverer with a sigh  
Looks round, to learn the history.

From those abrupt and perilous rocks  
The Man had fallen, that place of fear !  
At length upon the Shepherd's mind  
It breaks, and all is clear :  
He instantly recalled the name,  
And who he was, and whence he came ;  
Remembered too, the very day  
On which the Traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake  
This lamentable tale I tell !  
A lasting monument of words  
This wonder merits well.

The Dog, which still was hovering nigh,  
Repeating the same timid cry,  
This Dog had been through three months' space  
A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day  
When this ill-fated Traveller died,  
The Dog had watched about the spot,  
Or by his Master's side :  
How nourished here through such long time  
He knows, who gave that love sublime ;  
And gave that strength of feeling, great  
Above all human estimate !

1805.

# William Wordsworth

## TRIBUTE

### TO THE MEMORY OF A DOG

**L**IE here, without a record of thy worth,  
Beneath a covering of the common earth !  
It is not for unwillingness to praise,  
Or want of love, that here no Stone we raise ;  
More thou deserv'st ; but *this* man gives to man,  
Brother to brother, *this* is all we can.  
Yet they to whom thy virtues made thee dear  
Shall find thee through all changes of the year :  
This Oak points out thy grave ; the silent tree  
Will gladly stand a monument of thee.

We grieved for thee, and wished thy end were  
past ;  
And willingly have laid thee here at last :  
For thou hadst lived till everything that cheers  
In thee had yielded to the weight of years ;  
Extreme old age had wasted thee away,  
And left thee but a glimmering of the day ;  
Thy ears were deaf, and feeble were thy knees,—  
I saw thee stagger in the summer breeze,  
Too weak to stand against its sportive breath,  
And ready for the gentlest stroke of death.  
It came, and we were glad ; yet tears were shed ;  
Both man and woman wept when thou wert dead ;  
Not only for a thousand thoughts that were,  
Old household thoughts, in which thou hadst thy  
share ;

But for some precious boons vouchsafed to thee,  
Found scarcely anywhere in like degree !  
For love, that comes wherever life and sense  
Are given by God, in thee was most intense ;  
A chain of heart, a feeling of the mind,  
A tender sympathy, which did thee bind  
Not only to us men, but to thy kind :  
Yea, for thy fellow-brutes in thee we saw  
A soul of love, love's intellectual law :—  
Hence, if we wept, it was not done in shame ;  
Our tears from passion and from reason came,  
And, therefore, shalt thou 'be an honoured name  
1805.

# William Wordsworth

## EAGLES

COMPOSED AT DUNOLLIE CASTLE IN THE BAY OF OBAN

**D**ISHONOURED Rock and Ruin ! that, by law  
Tyrannic, keep the Bird of Jove embarr'd  
Like a lone criminal whose life is spared.  
Vexed is he, and screams loud. The last I saw  
Was on the wing ; stooping, he struck with awe  
Man, bird, and beast ; then, with a consort paired,  
From a bold headland, their loved aery's guard,  
Flew high above Atlantic waves, to draw  
Light from the fountain of the setting sun.  
Such was the Prisoner once ; and, when his plumes  
The sea-blast ruffles as the storm comes on,  
Then, for a moment, he, in spirit, resumes  
His rank 'mong freeborn creatures that live free,  
His power, his beauty, and his majesty.

1831.

# William Wordsworth

## THE WILD DUCK'S NEST

**T**HE imperial Consort of the Fairy-king  
Owns not a sylvan bower ; or gorgeous cell  
With emerald floored, and with purpureal  
shell

Ceilinged and roofed ; that is so fair a thing  
As this low structure, for the tasks of Spring,  
Prepared by one who loves the buoyant swell  
Of the brisk waves, yet here consents to dwell ;  
And spreads in steadfast peace her brooding wing.  
Words cannot paint the o'ershadowing yew-tree bough,  
And dimly-gleaming nest—a hollow crown  
Of golden leaves inlaid with silver down,  
Fine as the mother's softest plumes allow :  
I gazed—and, self-accused while gazing, sighed  
For human-kind, weak slaves of cumbrous pride !

1819.

# William Wordsworth

## SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF THE BIRD OF PARADISE

THE gentlest Poet, with free thoughts endowed,  
And a true master of the glowing strain,  
Might scan the narrow province with disdain  
That to the Painter's skill is here allowed.  
This, this the Bird of Paradise ! disclaim  
The daring thought, forget the name ;  
This the Sun's Bird, whom Glendoveers might own  
As no unworthy partner in their flight  
Through seas of ether where the ruffling sway  
Of nether air's rude billows is unknown ;  
Whom Sylphs, if e'er for casual pastime they  
Through India's spicy regions wing their way  
Might bow to as their Lord. What character  
O sovereign Nature ! I appeal to thee,  
Of all thy feathered progeny  
Is so unearthly, and what shape so fair ?  
So richly decked in variegated down,  
Green, sable, shining yellow, shadowy brown,  
Thus softly with each other blended,  
Hues doubtfully begun and ended ;  
Or intershooting, and to sight  
Lost and recovered, as the rays of light  
Glance on the conscious plumes touched here and  
there ?



Full surely, when with such proud gifts of life  
Began the pencil's strife,  
O'erweening Art was caught as in a snare.  
A sense of seemingly presumptuous wrong  
Gave the first impulse to the Poet's song;  
But, of his scorn repenting soon, he drew  
A juster judgment from a calmer view;  
And with a spirit freed from discontent  
Thankfully took an effort that was meant  
Not with God's bounty, Nature's love to vie,  
Or made with hope to please that inward eye  
Which ever strives in vain itself to satisfy,  
But to recall the truth by some faint trace  
Of power ethereal and celestial grace,  
That in the living creature finds on earth a place.  
1845.

# Samuel Taylor Coleridge

1772—1834,

## TO A YOUNG ASS

ITS MOTHER BEING TETHERED NEAR IT

**P**OOOR little Foal of an oppressèd race !  
I love the languid patience of thy face :  
And oft with gentle hand I give thee bread,  
And clap thy ragged coat and pat thy head.  
But what thy dullèd spirits hath dismay'd,  
That never thou dost sport along the glade ?  
And (most unlike the nature of things young)  
That earthward still thy moveless head is hung ?  
Do thy prophetic fears anticipate,  
Meek Child of Misery ! thy future fate ?  
The starving meal, and all the thousand aches  
“ Which patient Merit of the Unworthy takes ” ?  
Or is thy sad heart thrill'd with filial pain  
To see thy wretched mother's shorten'd chain ?  
And truly, very piteous is *her* lot  
Chain'd to a log within a narrow spot,  
Where the close-eaten grass is scarcely seen,  
While sweet around her waves the tempting green.  
Poor Ass ! thy master should have learnt to show  
Pity—best taught by fellowship of Woe !  
For much I fear me that *he* lives like thee,  
Half famish'd in a land of Luxury !  
How *askingly* its footsteps hither bend !  
It seems to say, “ And have I then *one* friend ? ”

Innocent foal ! thou poor despis'd forlorn !  
I hail thee *Brother*—spite of the fool's scorn !  
And fain would take thee with me, in the Dell  
Of Peace and mild Equality to dwell,  
Where Toil shall call the charmer Health his bride,  
And Laughter tickle Plenty's ribless side !  
How thou would'st toss thy heels in gamesome play,  
And frisk about, as lamb or kitten gay !  
Yea ! and more musically sweet to me  
Thy dissonant harsh bray of joy would be,  
Than warbled melodies that soothe to rest  
The aching of pale Fashion's vacant breast.

1794.

# Robert Southey

1774—1843.

## ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE OLD SPANIEL

**A**ND have they drown'd thee then at last !  
poor Phillis !  
The burden of old age was heavy on thee,  
And yet thou should'st have lived ! What though  
thine eye  
Was dim, and watch'd no more with eager joy  
The wonted call that on thy dull sense sunk  
With fruitless repetition, the warm Sun  
Might still have cheer'd thy slumbers ; thou did'st  
love  
To lick the hand that fed thee, and though past  
Youth's active season, even Life itself  
Was comfort. Poor old friend, how earnestly  
Would I have pleaded for thee ! thou had'st been  
Still the companion of my boyish sports ;  
And as I roam'd o'er Avon's woody cliffs,  
From many a day-dream has thy short quick bark  
Recall'd my wandering soul. I have beguiled  
Often the melancholy hours at school,  
Sour'd by some little tyrant, with the thought  
Of distant home, and I remember'd then  
Thy faithful fondness ; for not mean the joy  
Returning at the happy holydays,  
I felt from thy dumb welcome. Pensively  
Sometimes have I remark'd thy slow decay,

Feeling myself changed too, and musing much  
On many a sad vicissitude of Life.  
Ah poor companion ! When thou followed'st last  
Thy master's footsteps to the gate  
Which closed for ever on him, thou did'st lose  
Thy truest friend and none was left to plead  
For the old age of brute fidelity.  
But fare thee well ! Mine is no narrow creed ;  
And He who gave thee being did not frame  
The mystery of life to be the sport  
Of merciless Man. There is another world  
For all that live and move . . . a better one !  
Where the proud bipeds who would fain confine  
*Infinite Goodness* to the little bounds  
Of their own charity, may envy thee.  
BRISTOL, 1796.

# Robert Southey

## THE DANCING BEAR

RECOMMENDED TO THE ADVOCATES FOR THE SLAVE-  
TRADE

**R**ARE music ! I would rather hear cat-court-  
ship .

Under my bed-room window in the night,  
Than this scraped catgut's scream. Rare dancing too !  
Alas, poor Bruin ! How he foots the pole  
And waddles round it with unwieldy steps,  
Swaying from side to side ! . . . The dancing-master  
Hath had as profitless a pupil in him  
As when he would have tortured my poor toes  
To minuet grace, and made them move like clockwork  
In musical obedience. Bruin ! Bruin !  
Thou art but a clumsy biped ! . . . And the mob  
With noisy merriment mock his heavy pace,  
And laugh to see him led by the nose ! . . . them-  
selves

Led by the nose, embruted, and in the eye  
Of Reason from their Nature's purposes  
As miserably perverted.

Bruin-Bear !

Now could I sonnetize thy piteous plight,  
And prove how much my sympathetic heart  
Even for the miseries of a beast can feel,  
In fourteen lines of sensibility.  
But we are told all things were made for Man ;  
And I'll be sworn there's not a fellow here

Who would not swear 'twere hanging blasphemy  
To doubt that truth. Therefore as thou wert born,  
Bruin ! for Man, and Man makes nothing of thee  
In any other way, . . . most logically  
It follows, thou wert born to make him sport ;  
That that great snout of thine was form'd  
To hold a ring ; and that thy fat was given thee  
For an approved pomatum !

To demur•

Were heresy. And politicians say,  
(Wise men who in the scale of reason give  
No foolish feelings weight,) that thou art here  
Far happier than thy brother Bears who roam  
O'er trackless snow for food ; that being born  
Inferior to thy leader, unto him  
Rightly belongs dominion ; that the compact  
Was made between ye, when thy clumsy feet  
First fell into the snare, and he gave up  
His right to kill, conditioning thy life  
Should thenceforth be his property ; . . . besides  
'Tis wholesome for thy morals to be brought  
From savage climes into a civilized state,  
Into the decencies of Christendom. . . .  
Bear ! Bear ! it passes in the Parliament  
For excellent logic this ! What if we say  
How barbarously Man abuses power ?  
Talk of thy baiting, it will be replied,  
Thy welfare is thy owner's interest,  
But were thou baited it would injure thee,  
Therefore thou art not baited. For seven years  
Hear it, O Heaven, and give ear, O Earth !  
For seven long years, this precious syllogism  
Hath baffled justice and humanity !

WESTBURY, 1799.

# Leigh Hunt

1784—1859.

## TO THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET

**G**REEN little vaulter in the sunny grass,  
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,  
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,  
When even the bees lag at the summoning brass :  
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class  
With those who think the candles come too soon,  
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune  
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass :  
Oh, sweet and tiny cousins, that belong  
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,  
Both have your sunshine ; both, though small, are  
strong  
At your clear hearts ; and both seem given to earth  
To ring in thoughtful ears this natural song—  
Indoors and out, summer and winter—mirth.



# Percy Bysshe Shelley

1792—1822.

## TO A SKYLARK

**H**AIL to thee, blithe spirit !  
Bird, thou never wert,  
That from Heaven, or near it,  
Pourest thy full heart •  
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher  
From the earth thou springest  
Like a cloud of fire ;  
The blue deep thou wingest,  
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning  
Of the sunken sun,  
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,  
Thou dost float and run ;  
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even  
Melts around thy flight ;  
Like a star of Heaven,  
In the broad daylight  
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight,

Keen as are the arrows  
Of that silver sphere,  
Whose intense lamp narrows  
In the white dawn clear  
Until we hardly see—we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air  
With thy voice is loud,  
As, when night is bare,  
From one lonely cloud  
The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven is over-  
flowed.

What thou art we know not ;  
What is most like thee ?  
From rainbow clouds there flow not  
Drops so bright to see  
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a Poet hidden  
In the light of thought,  
Singing hymns unbidden  
Till the world is wrought  
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not :

Like a high-born maiden  
In a palace-tower,  
Soothing her love-laden  
Soul in secret hour  
With music sweet as love, which overflows her  
bower :

Like a glow-worm golden  
In a dell of dew,  
Scattering unbeholden  
Its aëreal hue  
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from  
the view !

Like a rose embowered  
In its own green leaves,  
By warm winds deflowered,  
'Till the scent it gives  
Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy-winged  
thieves :

Sound of vernal showers  
On the twinkling grass,  
Rain-awakened flowers,  
, All that ever was  
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass :

Teach us, Sprite or Bird  
What sweet thoughts are thine :  
I have never heard  
Praise of love or wine  
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal  
Or triumphant chant,  
Matched with thine would be all  
But an empty vaunt,  
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want,

What objects are the fountains  
Of thy happy strain ?  
What fields, or waves, or mountains ?  
What shapes of sky or plain ?  
What love of thy own kind ? what ignorance of pain ?

With thy clear keen joyance  
Languor cannot be :  
Shadow of annoyance  
Never came near thee :  
Thou lovest—but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,  
Thou of death must deem  
Things more true and deep  
Than we mortals dream,  
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream ?

We look before and after,  
And pine for what is not :  
Our sincerest laughter  
With some pain is fraught ;  
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest  
thought.

Yet if we could scorn  
Hate, and pride, and fear ;  
If we were things born  
Not to shed a tear,  
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures  
Of delightful sound,  
Better than all treasures  
That in books are found  
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground !

Teach me half the gladness  
That thy brain must know,  
Such harmonious madness  
From my lips would flow  
The world should listen then—as I am listening now.

1820.

# Hartley Coleridge

1796—1849.

## THE CRICKET

**W**HERE art thou, merry whistler of the  
hearth?  
What time the grate is stuffed with  
arid moss,

I miss thy shrill monotony of mirth,  
And do not love the bars' ferruginous gloss,  
When summer nights are blinking-dark and cold,  
And the dim taper cheerless to behold.

I thought thee sleeping in some cranny snug,  
Insensible to human weal or woe,  
Till earlier night bids snake the lazy rug,  
And lifts the poker for decisive blow.  
But thou hast left thy ashy winter mansion  
To air thy crisp-cased wings in wide expansion.

If I should see thee in thy summer dress  
'Tis odds if I should know thee, winter friend!  
The love I have not, but reverence no less,  
That can so closely to thy ways attend.  
And glad am I the cricket has a share  
Of the wide summer, and the ample air.

# Alfred de Vigny

1797—1863.

## THE DEATH OF THE WOLF

### I

THE clouds raced by across the yellow moon  
Like smoke-wreaths whirled around a forest  
fire,  
And to the far horizon's verge the woods  
Stretched black. We marched through dewy grass,  
amid  
High straggling heather and dense tangled gorse,  
Silently, till at last, 'neath rugged pines  
Like those that dot the bleak unfertile Landes,  
We came upon the foot-prints, clear defined,  
Left by the roving wolves that we had tracked.  
Holding our breath, we halted, listening.  
Neither the darkling woods that fronted us  
Nor the dim heath gave forth the faintest sound :  
Only a distant weathercock we heard,  
Fitfully moaning to the firmament.  
For high above the earth the wind was set,  
Scarcely brushing with its wings the topmost points  
Of solitary towers ; the oaks below,  
That leaned their gnarled boughs against the rocks,  
Like sleeping giants seemed, upon their arms  
Reclining. Utter silence reigned. At length  
The oldest of our hunting-party crouched  
Upon the sand with bent head, searching. Soon  
He rose and whispered softly, " Two old wolves,  
Two cubs. The slot is fresh." Then—for the man

Was one who never had been known at fault  
On such a quest—we hid as best we might  
The tell-tale gleam our rifle-barrels cast,  
And loosing in their sheaths our hunting knives,  
Through the low-hanging branches step by step  
Pushed on. But all at once again those three  
Stopped; and I, seeking for the cause, perceived  
Two sudden burning eyes that flamed on me  
Out of the dark, and slowly grew aware  
Of lithe and shadowy forms behind the eyes,  
That in the moonlight danced amid the gorse,  
As joyous greyhounds often may be seen,  
Leaping around their master noisily  
To welcome his return. Their form was like  
And like too was their happy gambolling;  
But silently the Children of the Wolf  
Enjoyed their game, knowing well that close at hand  
Within his walls lay Man, their enemy,  
But half asleep. The father stood erect;  
Beyond him, stretched against a sheltering bole,  
The female couched like that famed marble wolf  
The Romans once revered, whose hairy flanks  
Nourished and warmed the mighty demi-gods  
Remus and Romulus.

The male advanced  
Bristling, and crouched, with every muscle taut,  
His strong claws buried in the yielding sand.  
Surprised, surrounded, all retreat cut off,  
He deemed that he was lost, and suddenly  
Leapt as a flame leaps up, and by the throat  
Seized in his reeking jaws our boldest dog,  
Nor loosed the iron grip of those fierce fangs,  
Despite our shots that seared and tore his flesh,  
And our keen knives that pincer-like were crossed

Plunged in his entrails, till the strangled hound,  
Dead long before him, rolled beneath his feet.  
Then the wolf turned from him and gazed at us.  
Our knives were buried in his heaving flanks  
Up to the hilt, and pinned him to the sword,  
Drenched with his blood ; and crescent-wise our guns  
Menacingly surrounded him. Once more  
He gazed at us, and then sank slowly down  
Licking the blood and slaver from his mouth,  
And deigning not to know whence death had come,  
Closed his great eyes; and died without a sound.

## II

Leaning my brow on my unloaded gun  
I stood and pondered. Lacking now all heart,  
I cared not to pursue the mother wolf,  
Who with her cubs had lingered for a while  
Awaiting him And truly I believe  
That, but for them, his dark and beauteous mate  
Would ne'er have left him thus to undergo  
That last great ordeal aidless and alone.  
But 'twas her part to save them that they might  
Live on and learn the duty of free wolves :  
To suffer hunger's pangs unflinchingly,  
And never enter into that strange pact  
That Man has made with servile animals,  
Who for a pittance hunt at his behest  
The rightful tenants of the woods and hills.

## III

Alas, I thought, in spite of this proud name  
Of Man, I am ashamed, remembering



How weak we are, and how unstably wrought.  
Superb wild animals, you know indeed  
How to quit life and all its train of ills !  
When we consider how our days have passed  
On earth, and all that we have left undone,  
Silence alone is noble, and aught else  
Is feebleness and folly.

Ah, full well ,

I understand thee, tameless 'Wanderer,  
Whose last glance pierced me to the very heart.  
If thou art able—so it seem'd to say—  
Strive till by patient thought thy soul attains  
That lofty height of firm and stoic pride  
Which I, the native of the wilds, have held  
As birthright 'from the hour when I was born.  
To weep, lament, or pray is cowardice :  
In whatsoever path thy destiny  
Allots to thee, perform with steadfast will  
Thy long and arduous task ; and at the end,  
Suffer and die, like me, without a word.

1830.

*Translated from the French.*

# D. M. Moir

1798—1851.

## THE FOWLER

*And is there care in Heaven? and is there love  
In heavenly spirits to these creatures base,  
That may compassion of their evils move?  
There is—else much more wretched were the case  
Of men than beasts. But O! the exceeding grace  
Of highest God, that loves His creatures so,  
And all His works with mercy doth embrace,  
That blessed angels He sends to and fro,  
To serve on wicked man—to serve His wicked foe!*

### I

**I** HAVE an old remembrance—'tis as old  
As childhood's visions, and 'tis mingled with  
Dim thoughts and scenes grotesque, by fantasy  
From out oblivion's twilight conjured up,  
Ere truth had shorn imagination's beams,  
Or to forlorn reality tamed down  
The buoyant spirit. Yes! the shapes and hues  
Of winter twilight, often as the year  
Revolves, and hoar-frost grimes the window-sill,  
Bring back the lone waste scene that gave it birth,  
And make me, for a moment, what I was  
Then, on that Polar morn—a little boy,  
And Earth again the realm of fairyland.

## II

A Fowler was our visitant ; his talk  
At eve beside the flickering hearth, while howl'd  
Thé outward winds, and hail-drops on the pane  
Tinkled, or down the chimney in the flame  
Whizz'd as they melted, was of forest and field,  
Wherein lay bright wild birds and timorous beasts,  
That shunn'd the face of man ; and O ! the joy,  
The passion which lit up his brow, to con  
The feats of sleight and cunning skill by which  
Their haunts were near'd, or on the heathy hills,  
Or 'mid the undergrove ; on snowy moor,  
Or by the rushy lake—what time the dawn  
Reddens the east, or from on high the moon  
In the smooth waters sees her pictured orb,  
The white cloud slumbering in the windless sky,  
And midnight mantling all the silent hills.

## III

I do remember me the very time—  
(Though thirty shadowy years have lapsed between)—  
'Tis graven as by the hand of yesterday.  
For weeks had raved the winds, the angry seas  
Howl'd to the darkness, and down fallen the snows ;  
The redbreast to the window came for crumbs ;  
Hunger had to the coleworts driven the hare ;  
The crow at noontide peck'd the travell'd road ;  
And the wood-pigeon, timorously bold,  
Starv'd from the forest, near'd the homes of man.  
It was the dreariest depth of winter-tide,  
And on the ocean and its isles was felt  
The iron sway of the North ; yea, even the fowl—

That through the polar summer months could see  
A beauty in Spitzbergen's naked isles,  
Or on the drifting icebergs seek a home—  
Even they had fled, on southern wing, in search  
Of less inclement shores.

Perturb'd by dreams  
Pass'd o'er the slow night watches ; many a thought  
And many a hope was forward bent on morn ;  
But weary was the tedious chime on chime,  
And hour on hour 'twas dark, and still 'twas dark.  
At length we arose—for now we counted five—  
And by the flickering hearth array'd ourselves  
In coats and 'kerchiefs, for the early drift  
And biting season fit ; the fowling-piece  
Was shoulder'd, and the blood-stained game-pouch  
slung  
On this side, and the gleaming flask on that ;  
In sooth we were a most accordant pair ;  
And thus accoutred, to the lone sea-shore  
In fond and fierce precipitance we flew.

#### IV

There was no breath abroad ; each in its cave,  
As if enchanted, slept the winds, and left  
Earth in a voiceless trance : around the porch  
All stirlessly the darksome ivy clung ;  
All silently the leafless trees held up  
Their bare boughs to the sky ; the atmosphere,  
Untroubled in its cold serenity,  
Wept icy dews ; and now the later stars,  
As by some hidden necromantic charm,  
Dilate, amid the death-like calm profound,  
On the white slumber-mantled earth gazed down.—

Words may not tell, how to the temperament,  
And to the hue of that enchanted hour,  
The spirit was subdued—a wizard scene!  
In the far west, the Pentland's gloomy ridge  
Belted the pale blue sky, whereon a cloud,  
Fantastic, grey, and tinged with solemn light,  
Lay, like a dreaming monster, and the moon,  
Waning, above its silvery rim upheld.  
Her horns—as 'twere the Spectre of the Past.  
Silently, silently, on we trode and trode,  
As if a spell had frozen up our words.—  
White lay the wolds around us, ankle-deep  
In new-fallen snows, which champ'd beneath our tread;  
And, by the marge of winding Esk, which show'd  
The mirror'd stars upon its map of ice,  
Downwards in haste we journey'd to the shore  
Of Ocean, whose drear, multitudinous voice  
Unto the listening spirit of Silence sang.

## V

O leaf! from out the volume of far years  
Dissever'd, oft, how oft have the young buds  
Of spring unfolded, have the summer skies  
In their deep blue o'ercanopied the earth,  
And autumn, in September's rippling breeze,  
Rustled her harvests, since the theme was one  
Present, and darkly all that Future lay,  
Which now is of the perish'd and the past!  
Since then a generation's span hath fled,  
With all its varied whirls of chance and change—  
With all its casualties of life and death,  
And, looking round, sadly I feel this world  
Another, though the same;—another in

The eyes that gleam, the hearts that throb, the hop  
 The fears, the friendships of the soul ; the same  
 In outward aspect—in the hills which cleave,  
 As landmarks of historical renown,  
 With azure peaks the sky ;—in the green plain  
 That spreads its annual wild flowers to the sun ;  
 And in the river, whose blue course is mark'd  
 By many a well-known bend and shadowy tree :  
 Yet o'er the oblivious gulf, whose mazy gloom  
 Ensepulchres so many things, I see  
 As 'twere of yesterday—yet robed in tints  
 Which yesterday has lost, or never had—  
 The desolate features of that Polar morn,—  
 Its twilight shadows, and its twinkling stars—  
 The snows far spreading—the expanse of sand,  
 Ribb'd by the roaring and receded sea,  
 And shedding over all a wizard light,  
 The waning moon above the dim-seen hills.

## VI

At length, upon the solitary shore  
 We walk'd of Ocean, which, with sullen voice,  
 Hollow and never-ceasing, to the north  
 Sang its primeval song. A weary waste !—  
 We pass'd through pools where mussel, clam, and  
     wilk  
 Clove to their gravelly beds ; o'er slimy rocks  
 Ridgy and dark, with dank fresh fuci green,  
 Where the prawn wriggled and the tiny crab  
 Slid sideways from our path, until we gain'd  
 The land's extremest point, a sandy jut,  
 Narrow, and by the weltering waves begirt  
 Around ; and there we laid us down and watch'd

While from the west the pale moon disappear'd,  
Pronely, the sea-fowl and the coming dawn.

## VII

Now day with darkness for the mastery strove :  
The stars had waned away—all, save the last  
And fairest, Lucifer, whose silver lamp,  
In solitary beauty, twinkling shone  
'Mid the far west, where, through the clouds of rack  
Floating around, peep'd out at intervals  
A patch of sky ;—straightway the reign of night  
Was finish'd, and, as if instinctively,  
The ocean flocks, or slumbering on the wave  
Or on the isles, seem'd the approach of dawn  
To feel ; and, rising from afar, were heard  
Shrill shrieks and pipings desolate—a pause  
Ensued, and then the same lone sounds return'd,  
And suddenly the whirring rush of wings,  
Went circling round us o'er the level sands,  
Then died away ; and, as we look'd aloft,  
Between us and the sky we saw a speck  
Of black upon the blue—some huge, 'wild bird,  
Osprey or eagle, high amid the clouds  
Sailing majestic, on its plumes to catch  
The earliest crimson of the approaching day.

## VIII

'Twere sad to tell our murderous deeds that morn.  
Silent upon the chilly beach we lay  
Prone, while the drifting snow flakes o'er us fell,  
Like Nature's frozen tears for our misdeeds  
Of wanton cruelty. The eider ducks,

With their wild eyes, and necks of changeful blue,  
We watch'd, now diving down, now on the surge  
Flapping their pinions, of our ambuscade  
Unconscious till a sudden death was found ;  
While floating o'er us, in the graceful curves  
Of silent beauty, down the sea-mew fell ;  
The guillemot upon the shell bank lay  
Bleeding, and oft, in wonderment, its mate  
Flew round, with mournful cry, to bid it rise,  
Then shrieking, fled afar ; the sandpipers,  
A tiny flock, innumerable, as round  
And round they flew, bewail'd their broken ranks ;  
And the scared heron sought his inland marsh.  
With blood bedabbled plumes around us rose  
A slaughter'd hecatomb ; and to my heart  
(My heart then open to all sympathies)  
It spoke of tyrannous cruelties—of man  
The desolator ; and of some far day,  
When the accountable shall make account,  
And but the merciful shall mercy find.

## IX

Soul-sicken'd, satiate, and dissatisfied,  
An alter'd being homewards I return'd,  
My thoughts revolting at the thirst for blood,  
So brutalizing, so destructive of  
The finer sensibilities, which man  
In boyhood owns, and which the world destroys.  
Nature had preach'd a sermon to my heart :  
And from that moment, on that snowy morn--  
(Seeing that earth enough of suffering has  
And death)—all cruelty my soul abhorr'd,  
Yea, loathed the purpose and the power to kill.



# Leitch Ritchie

1800—1865.

## 'THE BEETLE-WORSHIPPER

**H**OW com'st thou on that gentle hand, where  
love should kisses bring  
For beauty's tribute? Answer me, thou  
foul and frightful thing!

Why dwell upon thy hideous form those reverent  
eyes that seem  
Themselves the worshipped stars that light some  
youthful poet's dream?

“When bends the thick and golden grain that ripens  
at my command,  
From the cracked earth I creep, to bless with food  
the fainting land;  
And thus no foulness in my form the grateful people  
see,  
But maids as sweet and bright as this are priestesses  
to me.

“Throned in the slime of ancient Nile, I bid the  
earth to bear,  
And blades and blossoms at my voice, and corn and  
fruits appear;  
And thus upon my loathly form are showers of beauty  
shed,  
And peace and plenty join to fling a halo round my  
head.”

Dark teacher, tell me yet again, what hidden lore  
doth lie

Beneath the exoteric type of thy philosophy ?

“The Useful is the Beautiful ; the good, and kind,  
and true,

To feature and to form impart their own celestial  
hue.

“Learn farther, that one common chain runs through  
the heavenly plan,

And links in bonds of brotherhood the beetle and  
the man ;

Both fair and foul alike from Him, the Lord of Love,  
do spring—

And this believe, he loves not well who loves not  
*everything.*”

# Nicolaus Lenau

1802—1850.

## THE BIRD'S NEST

**M**Y path anigh a lonely church once led,  
With halls and cloisters long untenanted;  
And entering, I felt a faint regret—  
A strange half-shyness of its builders fret  
My soul, that in their house I could not share  
The faith that had inspired this work so rare.

Where were they now? Lo! on their graves I  
stept;  
The new-mown grass on each green hillock lay,  
The air was heavy with the scent of hay,  
And o'er the summer eve the twilight crept.  
The wind played lightly through the linden trees,  
But motionless the grass lay in the breeze  
Unstirred by any passing breath or thrill,  
And 'neath the grass the garnered dead lay still.

Grey cloisters o'er whose windows ivy throws  
Its tangled stems the churchyard green enclose,  
With slender pillars exquisitely placed,  
And soaring arches boldly interlaced;  
The church stands fair and spacious to this day,  
Where pious monks erstwhile found cool retreat  
From worldly passions' fierce unrest and heat;  
The faith that built thus long hath passed away.

Around the pointed windows runs a zone  
Of leaves and flowers deftly hewn in stone ;  
More lifelike, loveliest of all, doth rest  
Upon a drooping branch a carven nest :  
The young their eager bills wide-opening,  
The anxious mother bearing them their food,  
With outspread wings poised o'er her callow brood,  
That soon themselves will learn to fly and sing.

I gazed upon the Master's perfect art  
Enthralled, and mused what thoughts had filled his  
heart.

Was it the Church's patient love and care  
For her weak children that was imaged there ?  
Or had he fashioned that sweet scene of love  
With sly intent the monks' desire to move ?  
At length methought his spirit spake to me :  
" The work enshrines remorseful memory."

A monk dwelt here in bygone days when Faith  
Condemned all those that doubted it to death ;  
But he was of that gentler band of old  
Whose piety was cast in purer mould.  
Clear as the air when storms are overpast,  
Chaste as the glance that on a corpse is cast,  
Benign and blessing-laden, unto all,  
As April sunrays on the meadows fall—  
Such was his heart and such his daily life.  
He injured none, nor ever stirred up strife ;  
The only tears he called forth were his own,  
That nightly o'er his pallid cheeks ran down.  
By fear and pity torn, and half distraught,  
He listened when rejoicing pilgrims brought  
Glad tidings that more heretics were slain,  
And all the land was full of hate and pain.

An Evil Spirit came to blast the world,  
And force the Cup of Sorrow on mankind,  
From whose fell potion poison-fumes upcurl'd,  
That raging ran as madly through the mind—  
As full of torture in a single hour,  
As though in that short span, with fiendish power,  
A century's sum of gall and bitterness  
He crushed forth from his vast blood-reeking press.

The Soldiers of the Cross<sup>1</sup> despoiled and fired  
Full many a burg; and, burned by thousands, those  
Who fought for Freedom heard as they expired  
The jeers and mocking laughter of their foes.

The monk recoils in hopeless wonderment  
From such foul deeds of wrath and rapine blent,  
And gloomy questionings his soul oppress:  
“Thine uttermost of crime who can foretell,  
O Man? What limits to thy wickedness  
Are set, save in the very heart of Hell?”  
But still the raving storm doth swell and spread,  
Till ev'n himself he views with boding dread.  
The name of Man, whence none that lives escapes,  
Him seems doth veil a dark abyss of sin;  
And delving in his breast he seeks what shapes  
Of hideous evil yet may lurk therein.

<sup>1</sup> “The Soldiers of the Cross” were those taking part in the famous—and infamous—Crusade against the Albigenses instituted by Pope Innocent III at the opening of the thirteenth century, which afforded one more example of Lucretius's “*Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*.” In 1209 Beziers was stormed by the “Crusaders” and some 20,000 people massacred there. In 1244 practically the last remnants of the unfortunate Albigenses were destroyed in the Pyrenees (see Peyrat's *Histoire des Albigeois*. Paris. 1880-2). [Ed.]

And when on distant childhood's years he broods,  
One cruel action stands out clear-confessed.  
For once, a boy, while roaming through the woods,  
He watched a bird fly homeward to the nest  
Wherein her hungry family did house,  
Close hidden in a veil of greenery :  
When lo ! a gust of wind that swept the tree  
Revealed the nest amid the swaying boughs.  
He seized a stone, and, hurling it on high,  
The hapless nestlings fell : but from that day  
He never could forget the piteous cry  
Wherewith the stricken mother fled away.

“ Whether we stone a birds'-nest or a town  
The impulse differs only in degree :  
'Tis but man's envious lust to shatter down  
The abode of happiness, where'er it be.”  
Thus plains the Holy Man, still conscience-stung  
By that sad mother and her murdered young.

And yearning to repair that youthful wrong,  
At length he wrought the wondrous nest of stone ;  
And oft he gazed upon it, long and long—  
Immersed in melancholy thought, alone.

*Translated from the German.*

# Victor Hugo

1802—1885.

## THE CRAYFISH

I PAID the fisherman on the sands,  
And took the horrible brute in my hands,  
A dubious being, a thing of the marge,  
Hydra in small, wood-louse in large,  
Formless as midnight, nameless as God.  
It opened a gullet ugly and odd,  
And tried to bite me; there came out  
From its carapace a sort of snout;  
God in the fearful order of Nature,  
Gave a dim place to the hideous creature;  
It tried to bite me; we struggled hard;  
It snapped my fingers—on their guard!  
But the seller was scarcely out of sight  
Behind a cliff, when it got its bite.  
So I said, "Live on and be blessed, poor beast,"  
And cast it into the seething yeast,  
Setting it free to depart and tell  
To the murmuring ocean where it fell,  
The christening font of the rising sun,  
That good, for ill, had once been done  
By a human crab to a scaly one!

*Translated by* SIR GEORGE YOUNG.

# Victor Hugo

## WINGED THINGS

**C**REATURES that had wings were always dear  
to me.

When I was a child I loved to climb a tree,  
Loved to capture in their nests the half-fledged chicks,  
Made them little cages out of osier sticks,  
Kept and fed them there with moss in which to hide.  
Later on I used to leave the windows wide,  
But they never flew away; or if they did,  
They would all come back to me, when they were  
bid.

One tame dove and I were quite old friends. . . .

Since then,

I have known the art of taming souls of men.

*Translated by* SIR GEORGE YOUNG.



# Elizabeth Browning

1806—1861.

## THE SEA-MEW

### I

**H**OW joyously the young sea-mew  
Lay dreaming on the waters blue  
Whereon one little bark had thrown  
A little shade, the only one,  
But shadows ever man pursue.

### II

Familiar with the waves and free  
As if their own white foam were he,  
His heart upon the heart of ocean  
Lay learning all its mystic motion,  
And throbbing to the thrice sea.

### III

And such a brightness in his eye  
As if the ocean and the sky  
Within him had lit up and nurst  
A soul God gave him not at first,  
To comprehend their majesty.

#### IV

We were not cruel, yet did sunder  
His white wing from the blue waves under,  
And bound it, while his tearless eyes  
Shone up to ours in calm surprise,  
As deeming us some ocean wonder.

#### V

We bore our ocean bird unto  
A grassy place where he might view  
The flowers that curtsey to the bees,  
The waving of the tall green trees,  
The falling of the silver dew.

#### VI

The flowers of earth were pale to him  
Who had seen the rainbow fishes swim ;  
And when earth's dew around him lay  
He thought of ocean's wingèd spray,  
And his eye waxèd sad and dim.

#### VII

The green trees round him only made  
A prison with their darksome shade ;  
And drooped 'his wing, and mournèd he  
For his own boundless glittering sea—  
Albeit he knew not they could fade.

## VIII

Then one her gladsome face did bring,  
Her gentle voice's murmuring,  
In ocean's stead his heart to move  
And teach him what was human love : •  
He thought it a strange, mournful thing.

## IX

He lay down in his grief to die,  
(First looking to the sea-like sky  
That hath no waves) because, alas !  
Our human touch did on him pass,  
And with our touch, our agony.

# Charles Tennyson Turner

1808—1879.

## BIRD-NESTING

**A** H! that half bashful and half eager face!  
Among the trees thy Guardian-Angel stands,  
With his heart beating, lest thy little hands  
Should come among the shadows and efface!  
The stainless beauty of a life of love,  
And childhood innocence—for hark, the boys  
Are peering through the hedgerows and the grove,  
And ply their cruel sport with mirth and noise;  
But thou hast conquer'd! and dispell'd his fear;  
Sweet is the hope thy youthful pity brings—  
And oft, methinks, if thou shalt shelter here,  
When these blue eggs are linnets' throats and wings,  
A secret spell shall bring about the tree  
The little birds that owed their lives to thee.

# Charles Tennyson Turner

## CYNOTAPHIUM

### I

**W**HEN some dear human friend to Death  
doth bow,  
Fair blooming flowers are strewn upon  
the bier,  
And haply, in the silent house, we hear  
The last wild kiss'ring on the marble brow,  
And lips that never miss'd reply till now;  
And thou, poor dog, wert in thy measure dear—  
And so I owe thee honour, and the tear  
Of friendship, and would all thy worth allow.  
In a false world, thy heart was brave and sound;  
So, when my spade carved out thy latest lair,  
A spot to rest thee on, I sought and found—  
It was a tuft of primrose, fresh and fair,  
And, as it was thy last hour above ground,  
I laid thy sightless head full gently there.

### II

“I cannot think thine all is buried here,”  
I said, and sigh'd—the wind awoke and blew  
The morning-beam along the gossamer,  
That floated o'er thy grave all wet with dew;  
A hint of better things, however slight,  
Will feed a living hope; it soothed my woe

To watch that little shaft of heavenly light  
Pass o'er thee, moving softly to and fro :  
Within our Father's heart the secret lies  
Of this dim world ; why should *we only* live,  
And what was I that I should close mine eyes  
On all those rich presumptions that relieve  
The meanest life from dust and ashes ? Lo !  
How much on such dark ground a gleaming thread  
can do !

## as Tennyson Turner

### THE STARLING

**P**OOOR bird ! why with such energy reprove  
My presence ? Why that tone which pines  
and grieves ?

At earliest dawn, thy sweet voice from the eaves  
Hath gone between us oft, a voice of love,  
A bond of peace. Why should I ever plot  
Thy ruin, or thy fond affections balk ?  
Dost thou not send me down thy happy talk  
Even to my pillow, though thou seest me not ?  
How should I harm thee ? Yet thy timid eye  
Is on me, and the harsh rebuke succeeds ;  
Not like the tender brooding note that pleads  
Thy cause so well, so all-unconsciously ;  
Yet shall to-morrow's dawning hear thy strain  
Renewed, and knit our indoor bond again.

## Charles Tennyson Turner

### TO A STARVED HARE IN THE GARDEN IN · WINTER · · ·

**S**OFT-FOOTED stroller from the herbless wood,  
Stealing so mutely through my garden ground,  
I will not balk thine eager quest for food,  
Nor take thy life, nor startle thee with sound.  
I spared the wanton squirrel, though I saw  
His autumn raid upon my nuts and cones;  
I spared his frisky brush and bushy jaw;  
And shall I wound the poor dishearten'd ones?  
Come freely: in my heart thy charter lies;  
Feed boldly: what thou gain'st I cannot lose.  
When robin shuffles on the snow-white sill  
We serve his winsome hunger; who would choose  
To daunt his ruddy breast and wistful eyes?  
But hare or robin, it is hunger still.



# Friedrich Hebbel

1813—1863.

## “THE BEAST”

**O** THOU art this harsh world's poor Caliban !  
For thou hast shown to mankind each fair fruit  
The earth brings forth, and thou hast made  
of Man

Thy God, and bowed thyself before him, mute.  
To thee he owes e'en knowledge of the spring

Wherein he can renew his failing breath ;

Yet since thy holy lamp, illumining

His path, first shone, eternal ban of death

He holdeth o'er thee—strange thank-offering !

This Being, æons since lost but for thee

(For thou didst guide him through that early  
night),

Rewardeth thee by every cruelty

His impulse may dictate—miscalled his Right.

1860.

*Translated from the German.*

# Friedrich Hebbel

## THE SECRET OF BEAUTY

TO HIS SQUIRREL

WHAT magic draws us to thee with such  
yearning,  
Such plenitude of purest love ?  
What spell hast thou beyond our dim discerning,  
Our inmost soul with sacred awe to move ?

In our dark night thou comest, to our seeming,  
A wanderer from realms more fair,  
An incarnation of that scent the dreaming  
Lotus-flower sheds upon the twilight air.

But not this spell alone it is doth bind us ;  
One deeper yet enthralls the soul,  
'Neath whose strong sway foreboding thoughts remind  
us  
How all the worlds on their set courses roll.

Whether thine eyes be closed in sleep, or glowing  
With happiness when thou dost play,  
Thy little life reflecteth, all unknowing,  
The universal life, in some strange way.

Thou art the butterfly, that, while it fareth  
Lightly o'er sun-sprent hill and lea,  
Inwrought upon its shining wings yet beareth  
The baffling clue to all life's mystery.

Perchance nought but wild instinct, or faint fleeting  
Desire, thine every action sways—  
And yet we watch thee with full hearts high-beating,  
As though a new star flashed upon our gaze.

Thou pluckest, by quick child-like impulse bidden,  
Blossom or bud from the moss'd tree,  
And wak'st in us fōrgotten dreams of Eden,  
By thy glad movements' gracious harmony.

Ah, joy! 'Tis surely thy unconscious duty,  
Ev'n when thy bright form is at rest,  
By radiation of thy faery beauty  
To still the eternal' longing in our breast.

1859.

*Translated from the German.*

# Walt Whitman

1819—1892.

## OUT OF THE CRADLE ENDLESSLY ROCKING

**O**UT of the cradle endlessly rocking,  
Out of the mocking-bird's throat, the musical  
shuttle,  
Out of the Nine-month midnight,  
Over the sterile sands and the fields beyond, where  
the child leaving his bed wander'd alone, bare-  
headed, barefoot,  
Down from the shower'd halo,  
Up from the mystic play of shadows twining and  
twisting as if they were alive,  
Out from the patches of briars and blackberries,  
From the memories of the bird that chanted to me,  
From your memories sad brother, from the fitful  
risings and fallings I heard,  
From under that yellow half-moon late-risen and  
swollen as if with tears,  
From those beginning notes of yearning and love  
there in the mist  
From the thousand responses of my heart never to  
cease,  
From the myriad thence-arous'd words,  
From the word stronger and more delicious than any,  
From such as now they start the scene revisiting,  
As a flock, twittering, rising, or overhead passing,  
Borne hither, ere all eludes me, hurriedly,  
A man, yet by these tears a little boy again,

Throwing myself on the sand, confronting the waves,  
I, chanter of pains and joys, uniter of here and here-  
• after,  
Taking all hints to use them, but swiftly leaping  
beyond them,  
A reminiscence sing.

Once Paumotu,  
When the lilac-scent was in the air and Fifth-month  
grass was growing,  
Up this seashore in some briers,  
Two feather'd guests from Alabama, two together,  
And their nest, and four light-green eggs spotted  
with brown,  
And every day the he-bird to and fro near at hand,  
And every day the she-bird crouch'd on her nest,  
silent, with bright eyes,  
And every day I, a curious boy, never too close,  
never disturbing them,  
Cautiously peering, absorbing, translating.

*Shine ! shine ! shine !  
Pour down your warmth, great sun !  
While we bask, we two together.*

*Two together !  
Winds blow south, or winds blow north,  
Day come white, or night come black,  
Home, or rivers and mountains from home,  
Singing all time, minding no time  
While we two keep together.*

Till of a sudden,  
May-be kill'd, unknown to her mate,

One forenoon the she-bird crouch'd not on the nest,  
Nor return'd that afternoon, nor the next,  
Nor ever appeared again.

And thenceforward all summer in the sound of the  
sea,  
And at night under the full of the moon in calmer  
weather,  
Over the hoarse surging of the sea,  
Or flitting from brier to brier by day,  
I saw, I heard at intervals the remaining one, the  
he-bird,  
The solitary guest from Alabama.

*Blow ! blow ! blow !  
Blow up sea-winds along Paumanok's shore ;  
I wait and I wait till you blow my mate to me.*

Yes, when the stars glisten'd,  
All night long on the prong of a moss-scallop'd stake,  
Down almost amid the slapping waves,  
Sat the lone singer wonderful causing tears.

He call'd on his mate,  
He pour'd forth the meanings which I of all men  
know.

Yes, my brother I know,  
The rest might not, but I have treasur'd every note,  
For more than once dimly down to the beach gliding,  
Silent, avoiding the moonbeams, blending myself  
with the shadows,  
Recalling now the obscure shapes, the echoes, the  
sounds and sights after their sorts,

The white arms out in the breakers tirelessly tossing,  
I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair,  
Listen'd long and long.

Listen'd to keep, to sing, now translating the notes,  
Following you my brother.

*Soothe ! soothe ! soothe !*  
*Close on its wave soothes the wave behind,*  
*And again another behind embracing and lapping,*  
*every one close,*  
*But my love soothes not me, not me.*

*Low hangs the moon, it rose late,*  
*It is lagging—O I think it is heavy with love, with love.*

*O madly the sea pushes upon the land,*  
*With love, with love.*

*O night ! do I not see my love fluttering out among*  
*the breakers ?*  
*What is that little black thing I see there in the white ?*

*Loud ! loud ! loud !*  
*Loud I call to you, my love !*

*High and clear I shoot my voice over the waves,*  
*Surely you must know who is here, is here,*  
*You must know who I am, my love.*

*Low hanging moon !*  
*What is that dusky spot in your brown yellow ?*  
*O it is the shape, the shape of my mate !*  
*O moon do not keep her from me any longer.*

*Land! land! O land!*

*Whichever way I turn, O I think you could give me  
my mate back again if you only would,  
For I am almost sure I see her dimly whichever way  
I look.*

*O rising stars!*

*Perhaps the one I want so much will rise, will rise  
with some of you.*

*O throat! O trembling throat!*

*Sound clearer through the atmosphere!*

*Pierce the woods, the earth,*

*Somewhere listening to catch you must be the one I want.*

*Shake out carols!*

*Solitary here, the night's carols!*

*Carols of lonesome love! death's carols!*

*Carols under that lagging, yellow, waning moon!*

*O under that moon where she droops almost down into  
the sea!*

*O reckless despairing carols.*

*But soft! sink low!*

*Soft! let me just murmur,*

*And do you wait a moment you husky-nois'd sea,*

*For somewhere I believe I heard my mate responding  
to me,*

*So faint, I must be still, be still to listen,*

*But not altogether still, for then she might not come  
immediately to me.*

*Hither my love!*

*Here I am! here!*

*With this just-sustain'd note I announce myself to you  
This gentle call is for you my love, for you.*



*Do not be decoy'd elsewhere,  
That is the whistle of the wind, it is not my voice.  
That is the fluttering, the fluttering of the spray,  
Those are the shadows of leaves.*

*O darkness! O in vain!  
O I am very sick and sorrowful.*

*O brown halo in the sky near the moon, drooping upon  
the sea!  
O troubled reflection in the sea!  
O throat! O throbbing heart!  
And I singing uselessly, uselessly all the night.*

*O past! O happy life! O songs of joy!  
In the air, in the woods, over fields,  
Loved! loved! loved! loved! loved!  
But my mate no more, no more with me!  
We two together no more.*

*The aria sinking,  
All else continuing, the stars shining,  
The winds blowing, the notes of the bird continuous  
echoing,  
With angry moans the fierce old mother incessantly  
moaning,  
On the sands of Paumanok's shore grey and rustling,  
The yellow half-moon enlarged, sagging down, droop-  
ing, the face of the sea almost touching,  
The boy ecstatic, with his bare feet the waves, with  
his hair the atmosphere dallying,  
The love in the heart long pent, now loose, now at  
last tumultuously bursting,  
The aria's meaning, the ears, the soul, swiftly de-  
positing,*

The strange tears down the cheeks coursing,  
The colloquy there, the trio, each uttering,  
The undertone, the savage old mother incessantly  
crying,

To the boy's soul's questions sullenly timing, some  
drown'd secret hissing,

To the outsetting bard.

Demon or bird ! (said the boy's soul).

Is it indeed toward your mate you sing ? or is it  
really to me ?

For I that was a child, my tongue's use sleeping,  
now I have heard you,

Now in a moment I know what I am for, I awake,  
And already a thousand singers, a thousand songs,  
clearer, louder and more sorrowful than yours,  
A thousand warbling echoes have started to life  
within me, never to die

O you singer solitary, singing by yourself, projecting me,  
O solitary me listening, never more shall I cease  
perpetuating you,

Never more shall I escape, never more the reverbera-  
tions,

Never more the cries of unsatisfied love be absent  
from me, •

Never again leave me to be the peaceful child I was  
before what there in the night

By the sea under the yellow and sagging moon,  
The messenger there arous'd, the fire, the sweet hell  
within,

The unknown want, the destiny of me !

O give me the clew ! (it lurks in the night here some-  
where),

O if I am to have so much, let me have more !

A word then (for I will conquer it),  
The word final, superior to all,  
Subtle, sent up—what is it?—I listen;  
Are you whispering it, and have been all the time  
    you sea-waves?  
Is that it from your liquid rims and wet sands?

Where'to answering, the sea,  
Delaying not, hurrying not,  
Whisper'd me through the night, and very plainly  
    before daybreak,  
Lisp'd to me the low and delicious word death,  
And again death, death, death, death,  
Hissing melodious, neither like the bird nor like my  
    arous'd child's heart,  
But edging near as privately for me rustling at my feet,  
Creeping thence steadily up to my ears and laving  
    me softly all over,  
Death, death, death, death, death.

Which I do not forget,  
But fuse the song of my dusky demon and brother,  
That he sang to me in the moonlight on Paumanok's  
    grey beach,  
With the thousand responsive songs at random,  
My own songs awaked from that hour,  
And with them the key, the word up from the waves,  
The word of the sweetest song and all songs,  
That strong and delicious word which, creeping to  
    my feet,  
(Or like some old crone rocking the cradle, swathed  
    in sweet garments, bending aside),  
The sea whisper'd me.

# Matthew Arnold

1822—1888.

## GEIST'S GRAVE

**F**OUR years!—and didst thou stay above  
The ground, which hides thee now, but four?  
And all that life, and all that love,  
Were crowded, Geist! into no more?

Only four years those winning ways,  
Which make me for thy presence yearn,  
Call'd us to pet thee or to praise,  
Dear little friend! at every turn?

That loving heart, that patient soul,  
Had they indeed no longer span,  
To run their course, to reach their goal,  
And read their homily to man?

That liquid, melancholy eye,  
From whose pathetic soul-fed springs  
Seem'd surging the Virgilian cry,<sup>1</sup>  
The sense of tears in mortal things—

That steadfast, mournful strain, consoled  
By spirits gloriously gay,  
And temper of heroic mould—  
What, was four years their whole short day?

<sup>1</sup> *Sunt lacrimæ rerum!*

Yes, only four!—and not the course  
Of all the centuries yet to come,  
And not the infinite resource  
Of Nature, with her countless sum

Of figures, with her fulness vast  
Of new creation evermore,  
Can ever quite repeat the past,  
Or just thy little self restore.

Stern law of every mortal lot!  
Which man, proud man, finds hard to bear,  
And builds himself I know not what  
Of second life I know not where.

But thou when struck thine hour to go,  
On us, who stood despondent by,  
A meek last glance of love didst throw,  
And humbly lay thee down to die.

Yet would we keep thee in our heart—  
Would fix our favourite on the scene,  
Nor let thee utterly depart  
And be as if thou ne'er hadst been.

And so there rise these lines of verse  
On lips that rarely form them now;  
While to each other we rehearse:  
*Such ways, such arts, such looks hadst thou?*

We stroke thy broad brown paws again,  
We bid thee to thy vacant chair,  
We greet thee by the window-pane,  
We hear thy scuffle on the stair.

We see the flaps of thy large ears  
Quick raised to ask which way we go ;  
Crossing the frozen lake appears  
Thy small black figure on the snow !

Nor to us only art thou dear  
Who mourn thee in thine English home ;  
Thou hast thine absent master's tear,  
Dropt by the far Australian foam.

Thy memory lasts both here and there,  
And thou shalt live as long as we.  
And after that—thou dost not care !  
In us was all the world to thee.

Yet, fondly zealous for thy fame,  
Even to a date beyond our own  
We strive to carry down thy name,  
By moulded turf, and graven stone.

We lay thee, close within our reach,  
Here, where the grass is smooth and warm,  
Between the holly and the beech,  
Where oft we watch'd thy couchant form,

Asleep, yet lending half an ear  
To travellers on the Portsmouth road ;—  
There build we thee, O guardian dear,  
Mark'd with a stone, thy last abode !

Then some, who through this garden pass,  
When we too, like thyself, are clay,  
Shall see thy grave upon the grass,  
And stop before the stone, and say :

*People who lived here long ago  
Did by this stone, it seems, intend  
To name for future times to know  
' The dachshound, Geist, their little friend.*

# Matthew Arnold

## POOR MATTHIAS

**P**OOOR Matthias!—Found him lying  
Fall'n beneath his perch and dying?  
Found him stiff, you say, though warm—  
All convulsed his little form?  
Poor canary! many a year  
Well he knew his mistress dear,  
Now in vain you call his name,  
Vainly raise his rigid frame,  
Vainly warm him in your breast,  
Vainly kiss his golden crest,  
Smooth his ruffled plumage fine,  
Touch his trembling beak with wine.  
One more gasp—it is the end!  
Dead and mute our tiny friend!  
—Songster thou of many a year,  
Now thy mistress brings thee here,  
Says, it fits that I rehearse,  
Tribute due to thee, a verse,  
Meed for daily song of yore  
Silent now for evermore.

•

Poor Matthias! Wouldst thou have  
More than pity? claim'st a stave?  
—Friends more near us than a bird  
We dismiss'd without a word.



Rover, with the good brown head,  
 Great Atossa, they are dead ;  
 Dead, and neither prose nor rhyme  
 Tells the praises of their prime.  
 Thou didst know them old and grey,  
 Know them in their sad decay.  
 Thou hast seen Atossa sage  
 Sit for hours beside thy cage ;  
 Thou wouldst chirp, thou foolish bird,  
 Flutter, chirp—she never stirr'd !  
 What were now these toys to her ?  
 Down she sank amid her fur ;  
 Eyed thee with a soul resign'd—  
 And thou deemedst cats were kind !  
 —Cruel, but composed and bland,  
 Dumb, inscrutable and grand,  
 So Tiberius might have sat,  
 Had Tiberius been a cat. '

Rover died—Atossa too.  
 Less than they to us are you !  
 Nearer human were their powers,  
 Closer knit their life with ours.  
 Hands had stroked them, which are cold,  
 Now for years, in churchyard mould ;  
 Comrades of our past were they,  
 Of that unreturning day.  
 Changed and aging, they and we  
 Dwelt, it seem'd, in sympathy.  
 Away from their presence broke  
 Somewhat which remembrance woke  
 Of the loved, the lost, the young--  
 Yet they died, and died unsung.

Geist came next, our little friend ;  
Geist had verse to mourn his end.  
Yes, but that enforcement strong  
Which compell'd for Geist a song—  
All that gay courageous cheer,  
All that human pathos dear ;  
Soul-fed eyes with suffering worn,  
Pain heroically borne,  
Faithful love in depth divine—  
Poor Matthias, were they thine ?

Max and Kaiser we to-day  
Greet upon the lawn at play ;  
Max a dachshound without blot—  
Kaiser should be, but is not.  
Max, with shining yellow coat,  
Prinking ears and dewlap throat—  
Kaiser, with his collie face,  
Penitent for want of race.  
—Which may be the first to die,  
Vain to augur, they or I !  
But as age comes on I know,  
Poet's fire gets faint and low ;  
If so be that travel they  
First the inevitable way,  
Much I doubt if they shall have  
Dirge from me to crown their grave.  
Something haunts my conscience, brings  
Sad, compunctious visitings.  
Other favourites, dwelling here,  
Open lived to us, and near ;  
Well we knew when they were glad,  
Plain we saw if they were sad,

Joy'd with them when they were gay,  
Soothed them in their last decay ;  
Sympathy could feel and show  
Both in weal of theirs and woe.

Birds, companions more unknown,  
Live beside us, but alone ;  
Finding not, do all they can,  
Passage from their souls to man.  
Kindness we bestow, and praise,  
Laud their plumage, greet their lays ;  
Still beneath their feather'd breast,  
Stirs a history unexpress'd.  
Wishes there, and feelings strong,  
Incommunicably throng ;  
What they want, we cannot guess,  
Fail to track their deep distress—  
Dull look on when death is nigh,  
Note no change, and let them die.,  
Was it, as the Grecian sings,  
Birds were born the first of things,  
Before the sun, before the wind,  
Before the gods, before mankind,  
Airy, ante-mundane throng—  
Witness their unworldly song !  
Proof they give, too, primal powers,  
Of a prescience more than ours—  
Teach us, while they come and go,  
When to sail, and when to sow.  
Cuckoo calling from the hill,  
Swallow skimming by the mill,  
Swallows trooping in the sedge,  
Starlings swirling from the hedge,

Mark the seasons, map our year,  
As they show and disappear.  
But, with all this travail sage  
Brought from that anterior age,  
Goes an unreversed decree  
Whereby strange are they and we;  
Making want of theirs, and plan,  
Indiscernible by man.

•

No, away with tales like these  
Stol'n from Aristophanes!  
Does it, if we miss your mind,  
Prove us so remote in kind?  
Birds! we but repeat on you  
What amongst ourselves we do.  
Somewhat more or somewhat less,  
'Tis the same unskilfulness.  
What you feel, escapes our ken—  
Know we more our fellow-men?  
Human suffering at our side,  
Ah, like yours is undescried!  
Human longings, human fears,  
Miss our eyes and miss our ears.  
Little helping, wounding much,  
Dull of heart, and hard of touch,  
Brother man's despairing sign  
Who may trust us to divine?  
Who assure us, sundering powers  
Stand not 'twixt his soul and ours?

•

Poor Matthias! See, thy end  
What a lesson doth it lend!  
For that lesson thou shalt have,  
Dead canary bird, a stave!

Telling how, one stormy day,  
Stress of gale and showers of spray  
Drove my daughter small and me  
Inland from the rocks and sea.  
Driv'n inshore, we follow down  
Ancient streets of Hastings town—  
Slowly thread them—when behold,  
French canary-merchant old  
Shepherd'ing his flock of gold  
In a low dim-lighted pen  
Scann'd of tramps and fishermen !  
There a bird, high-coloured, fat,  
Proud of port, though something squat—  
Pursy, play'd-out Philistine—  
Dazzled Nelly's youthful eyne.  
But, far in, obscure, there stirr'd  
On his perch a sprightlier bird,  
Courteous-cyed, erect and slim,  
And I whisper'd, " Fix on *him* ! "  
Home we brought him, young and fair,  
Songs to trill in Surrey air.  
Here Matthias sang his fill,  
Saw the cedars of Pains Hill ;  
Here he pour'd his little soul,  
Heard the murmur of the Mole.  
Eight in number now the years  
He hath pleased our eyes and ears ;  
Other favourites he hath known  
Go, and now himself is gone.  
Poor Matthias ! could'st thou speak,  
What a tale of thy last week !  
Every morning did we pay  
Stupid salutations gay,  
Suited well to health, but how

Mocking, how incongruous now !  
Cake we offer'd, sugar, seed,  
Never doubtful of thy need ;  
Praised, perhaps, thy courteous eye,  
Praised thy golden livery.  
Gravely thou the while, poor dear !  
Sat'st upon thy perch to hear,  
Fixing with a mute regard .  
Us, thy human keepers hard,  
Troubling, with our chatter vain,  
Ebb of life, and mortal pain—  
Us, unable to divine  
Our companion's dying sign,  
Or o'erpass the severing sea,  
Set betwixt ourselves and thee,  
Till the sand thy feathers smirch  
Fallen, dying off thy perch !  
—Fare thee well, companion dear !  
Fare for ever well, nor fear,  
Tiny though thou art, to stray  
Down the uncompanion'd way !  
We without thee, little friend,  
Many years have not to spend ;  
What are left, will hardly be  
Better than we spent with thee.

# Alexander Petöfi

1822—1849

## THE CAGED LION

**P**ENT within rusty bars the lion stands  
Who once was lord of boundless desert  
lands.

No longer through his kingdom can he roam,  
A sordid cage is now forsooth his home.

How can men gaze on him unmoved, how see  
Such desecration unprotestingly ?

Although of liberty he is bereft,  
Surely some semblance thereof might he left ?

Though he may ne'er more bask beneath the palm,  
Grant him at least some caseful shade and calm.

Behold him ! That proud mien, that clear regard,  
Captivity hath not yet wholly marred.

His freedom, that was all in all to him,  
Is lost—but not his stateliness of limb.

Firm-wrought, as those old Pyramids he seems,  
Whose sombre stones oft shimmered o'er his dreams.

His restless thoughts reach ever back again  
To that free life upon his native plain.

Once more he breathes the fierce simoom's hot blast,  
That rages round him over all the vast

Expanse. O goodly Earth! Glad days of yore!  
But lo, a sudden footstep at the door!

And in a moment all his dream hath fled:  
The keeper's lash descends upon his head.

Is he so abject grown, ye heavenly powers?  
Before a churl armed with a whip he cowers!

To such humiliation he must now  
Submit: that mighty neck so deeply bow.

In utter wretchedness he roars aloud  
Upon the stolid, gaping, staring crowd.

How dare they mock him, that dull-witted throng?  
For if he burst those bars, so seeming-strong,

Like wind-blown leaves before him swept, pell-mell,  
Their very souls would scarce be left for hell!

*Translated from the Hungarian.*



# George Macdonald

1824—1905.

## ON A MIDGE

**W**HENCE do ye come, ye creatures? Each  
of you  
Is perfect as an angel! wings and eyes  
Stupendous in their beauty—gorgeous dyes  
In feathery fields of purple and of blue!  
Would God I saw a moment as ye do!  
I would become a molecule in size,  
Rest with you, hum with you, or slanting rise  
Along your one dear sunbeam, could I view  
The pearly secret which each tiny fly—  
Each tiny fly that hums and bobs and stirs,  
Hides in its little breast eternally  
From you, ye prickly, grim philosophers  
With all your theories that sound so high:  
Hark to the buzz a moment, my good sirs!

# George Meredith

1828—1909.

## THE TWO BLACKBIRDS

**A** BLACKBIRD in a wicker cage,  
That hung and swung 'mid fruits and  
flowers,  
Had learnt the song charm, to assuage  
The dreariness of its wingless hours.

And ever when the song was heard,  
From trees that shade the grassy plot  
Warbled another glossy bird,  
Whose mate not long ago was shot.

Strange anguish in that creature's breast,  
Unwept like human grief, unsaid,  
Has quickened in its lonely nest  
A living impulse from the dead.

Not to console its own wild smart,—  
But with a kindling instinct strong,  
The novel feeling of its heart  
Beats for the captive bird of song.

And when those mellow notes are still,  
It hops from off its choral perch,  
O'er path and sward, with busy bill,  
All grateful gifts to peck and search.

Store of ouzel dainties choice  
To those white swinging bars it brings;  
And with a low consoling voice  
It talks between its fluttering wings.

Deeply in their bitter grief  
Those sufferers reciprocate,  
The one sings for its woodland life,  
The other for its murdered mate.

But deeper doth the secret prove,  
Uniting those sad creatures so;  
Humanity's great link of love  
The common sympathy of woe.

Well divined from day to day  
Is the swift speech between them twain;  
For when the bird is scared away,  
The captive bursts to song again.

Yet daily with its flattering voice,  
Talking amid its fluttering wings,  
Store of ouzel dainties choice  
With busy bill the poor bird brings.

And shall I say, till weak with age  
Down from its drowsy branch it drops,  
It will not leave that captive cage,  
Nor cease those busy searching hops?

Ah, no! the moral will not strain;  
Another sense will make it range,  
Another mate will soothe its pain,  
Another season work a change.

But thro' the live-long summer, tried,  
A pure devotion we may see ;  
The ebb and flow of Nature's tide ;  
A self-forgetful sympathy.

1851

# George Meredith

## YOUTH IN AGE

**O**NCE I was part of the music I heard  
On the boughs or sweet between earth and  
sky,

For joy of the beating of wings on high  
My heart shot into the breast of the bird.

I hear it now and I see it fly,

And a life in wrinkles again is stirred,

My heart shoots into the breast of the bird,  
As it will for sheer love till the last long sigh.

1908.

# Sir Edwin Arnold

1832—1904..

## THE ADULTERESS

PITY ! for He is Pitiful ;—a king  
Is likest Allah not in triumphing  
'Mid enemies o'erthrown, nor seated high  
On stately gold, nor if the echoing sky  
Rings with his name, but when sweet mercy sways  
His words and deeds. The very best man prays  
For Allah's help, since feeble are the best ;  
And never shall man reach the angelic rest  
Save by the vast compassion of Heaven's King.  
Our Prophet once, Ayesha answering,  
Spake this : " I shall not enter that pure place,  
Even I, except through Allah's covering grace."  
If *he* besought the Sovereign Clemency,  
How must we supplicate it ? Truly thus  
Great need there is of Allah's grace for us,  
And that we live compassionate !

Hast seen  
The record written of Salah-ud-Deen,  
The Sultan ? How he met upon a day,  
In his own city on the public way,  
A woman whom they led to die. The veil  
Was stripped from off her weeping face, and pale  
Her shamed cheeks were, and wild her dark fixed  
eye,  
And her lips drawn with terror at the cry  
Of the harsh people and the rugged stones

Borne in their hands to break her flesh and bones,  
For the law stood that sinners such as she  
Perish by stoning, and this doom must be ;  
So went the wan adulteress to her death.  
High noon it was, and the hot Khamseen's breath  
Blew from the desert sands and parched the town.  
The crows gasped, and the kine went up and down  
With lolling tongues ; the camels moaned ; a crowd  
Pressed with their pitchers, wrangling high and loud  
About the tank ; and one dog by a well,  
Nigh dead with thirst, lay where he yelped and fell,  
Glaring upon the water out of reach,  
And praying succour in a silent speech,  
So piteous were his eyes. Which, when she saw  
This woman from her foot her shoe did draw,  
Albeit death-sorrowful ; and looping up  
The long silk of her girdle, made a cup  
Of the heel's hollow, and thus let it sink  
Until it touched the cool black water's brink ;  
So filled th' embroidered shoe, and gave a draught  
To the spent beast, which whined and fawned and  
quaffed  
Her kind gift to the dregs ; next licked her hand  
With such glad looks that all might understand  
He held his life from her ; then, at her feet  
He followed close all down the cruel street,  
Her one friend in that city.

But, the King,  
Riding within his litter, marked this thing,  
And how the woman on her way to die,  
Had such compassion for the misery  
Of that parched hound : " Take off her chain, and  
place  
The veil once more above the sinner's face,

And lead her to her house in peace ! ” he said,  
“ The law is that the people stone thee dead,  
For that which thou has wrought ; but there is come  
Fawning around thy feet, a witness dumb,  
Not heard upon thy trial ; this brute beast  
Testifies for thee, sister ! whose weak breast  
Death could not make ungentle. I hold rule  
In Allah’s stead, who is the Merciful,  
And hope for Mercy ; therefore go thou free—  
I dare not show less pity unto thee.”



# Theodore Watts-Dunton

1832—1914.

## MOTHER CAREY'S CHICKEN

### I

I CANNOT brook thy gaze, belovèd bird ;  
That sorrow is more than human in thine eye ;  
Too deeply, brother, is my spirit stirred  
To see thee here, beneath the landmen's sky,  
Cooped in a cage "with food thou canst not eat,  
Thy "snow-flake " soiled, and soiled those conquering  
feet  
That walked the billows, while thy "*sweet-sweet-*  
*sweet* "  
Proclaimed the tempest nigh.

Bird whom I welcomed while the sailors cursed,  
Friend whom I blessed wherever keels may roam,  
Prince of my childish dreams, whom mermaids nursed  
In purple billows—silver of ocean foam,  
Abashed I stand before the mighty grief  
That quells all other : Sorrow's King and Chief,  
Who rides the wind and holds the sea in fief,  
Then finds a cage for home.

### II

From out thy jail thou seest yon heath and woods,  
But canst thou hear the birds and smell the flowers ?  
Ah, no ! those rain-drops tumbling on the buds  
Bring only visions of the salt sea-showers.

“The sea!” the linnets pipe from hedge and heath;  
“The sea!” the honeysuckles whisper and breathe,  
And tumbling waves, where those wild-roses wreathe,  
Murmur from inland bowers.

These winds so soft to others—how they burn!  
The mavis sings with gurgle and ripple and splash,  
To thee yon swallow seems a wheeling tern;  
And when the rain recalls the briny lash,  
Old Ocean’s kiss we love—oh, when thy sight  
Is mocked with Ocean’s horses—manes of white,  
The long and shadowy flanks, the shoulders bright—  
Bright as the lightning’s flash—

### III

When all these scents of heather and brier and whin,  
All kindly breathe of land—shrub, flower, and vine,  
Recall the sea-scents, till thy feathered skin  
Tingles in answer to the dream of brine—  
When thou, remembering there thy royal birth,  
Dost see between the bars a world of dearth,  
Is there a grief—a grief on all the earth—  
So heavy and dark as thine.

But I can bring thee freedom—I (thank God!),  
Who loved thee more than albatross or gull—  
Loved thee, and loved the waves thy footsteps trod—  
Dream’d of thee when, becalmed, we lay a-hull—  
’Tis I, thy friend, who once, a child of six,  
To find where Mother Carey fed her chicks,  
Climbed up the boat and then with bramble sticks  
Tried all in vain to scull.

#### IV

Thy friend who shared thy Paradise of Storm—  
The little dreamer of the cliffs and coves,  
Who knew thy mother, saw her shadowy form  
Behind the cloudy bastions where she moves,  
And heard her call : “ Come ! for the welkin thickens,  
And tempests mutter and the lightning quickens ! ”  
Then, starting from his dream, would find the chickens  
Were daws or blue rock-doves—

Thy friend who owned another Paradise,  
Of calmer air, a floating isle of fruit,  
Where sang the Nereids on a breeze of spice,  
While Triton, from afar, would sound salute :  
There wast thou winging, though the skies were calm ;  
For marvellous strains as of the morning’s shalm  
Were struck by ripples round that isle of palm  
Whose shores were Ocean’s lute.

#### V

And now to see thee here my king, my king,  
Far-glittering memories mirrored in those eyes,  
As if there shone within each iris-ring  
An orbèd world—ocean and hills and skies—  
Those black wings ruffled whose triumphant sweep  
Conquered in sport !—yea, up the glimmering steep  
Of highest billow, down the deepest deep,  
Sported with victories !—

To see thee here !—a coil of wilted weeds  
Beneath those feet that danced on diamond spray,  
Rider of sportive Ocean’s reinless steeds—  
Winner in Mother Carey’s Sabbath-fray

When, stung by magic of the Witch's chant,  
They rise, each foamy-crested combatant—  
They rise and fall and leap and foam and gallop  
and pant  
Till albatross, sea-swallow, and cormorant  
Must flee like doves away !

## VI

And shalt thou ride no more where thou hast ridden,  
And feast no more in hyaline halls and caves,  
Master of Mother Carey's secrets hidden,  
Master and monarch of the wind and waves,  
Who never, save in stress of angriest blast,  
Asked ship for shelter—never till at last  
The foam-flakes hurled against the sloping mast  
Slashed thee like whirling glaives ?

Right home to fields no seamew ever kenned,  
Where scarce the great sea-wanderer fares with thee,  
I come to take thee—nay, 'tis I, thy friend !  
Ah, tremble not—I come to set thee free ;  
I come to tear this cage from off this wall,  
And take thee hence to that fierce festival  
Where billows march and winds are musical,  
Hymning the Victor-Sea !

## VII

Yea, lift thine eyes to mine. Dost know me now ?  
Thou'rt free ! thou'rt free ! Ah, surely a bird can  
smile !

Dost know me, Petrel. Dost remember how  
I fed thee in the wake for many a mile,

Whilst thou wouldst pat the waves, then, rising,  
take

The morsel up and wheel about the wake.

Thou'rt free, thou'rt free, but for thine own dear  
sake

I keep thee caged awhile.

Away to sea ! no matter where the coast :

The road that turns for home turns never wrong ;

Where waves run high my bird will not be lost :

*His* home I know : 'tis where the winds are strong—

Where, on a throne of billows, rolling hoary

And green and blue and splashed with sunny glory,

Far, far from shore—from farthest promontory—

Prophetic Nature bares the secret of the story

That holds the spheres in song.

# Sir Lewis Morris

1833—1907.

## TO THE TORMENTORS

**D**EAR little friend, who, day by day,  
Before the door of home  
Art ready waiting till thy master come,  
With monitory paw and noise,  
Swelling to half delirious joys,  
Whether my path I take  
By leafy coverts known to thee before,  
Where the gay coney loves to play,  
Or the loud pheasant whirls from out the brake  
Unharm'd by us, save for some frolic chase,  
Or innocent panting race;  
Or who, if by the sunny river's side  
Haply my steps I turn,  
With loud petition constantly dost yearn  
To fetch the whirling stake from the warm tide;  
Who, if I chide thee, grovellest in the dust,  
And dost forgive me though I am unjust,  
Blessing the hand that smote: who with fond  
love  
Gazest, and fear for me, such as doth move  
Those finer souls which know, yet may not see,  
And are wrapped round and lost in ecstasy;—  
And thou, dear little friend and soft,  
Breathing a gentle air of hearth and home;  
Whose low purr to the lonely ear doth oft  
With deep refreshment come;

Though thy quick nature is not frank and gay  
As that one's, yet with graceful play  
Thou dost beguile the evenings, and dost sit  
With mien demurely fit ;  
With half closed eyes, as in a dream  
Responsive to the singing steam,  
Most delicately clean and white,  
Thou baskest in the flickering light ;  
Quick-tempered art thou, and yet, if a child  
Molest thee, pitiful and mild ;  
And always thy delight is, simply neat,  
To seat thee faithful at thy master's feet ;—

And thou, good friend and strong,  
Who art the docile labourer of the world ;  
Who groanest when the battle mists are curled  
On the red plain ; who toilest all day long  
To make our gain or sport ; who art the care  
That cleanses idle lives, which, but for thee  
And thy pure, noble nature, perhaps might sink  
To lower levels, born of lust and drink,  
And half-forgotten sloughs of infamy,  
Which desperate souls could dare ;—  
And ye, fair timid things, who lightly play  
By summer woodlands at the close of day ;—  
What are ye all, dear creatures, tame or wild ?  
What other nature yours than of a child,  
Whose dumbness finds a voice mighty to call,  
In wordless pity, to the souls of all  
Whose lives I turn to profit, and whose mute  
And constant friendship links the man and brute ?  
Shall I consent to raise  
A torturing hand against your few and evil days ?

Shall I indeed delight  
To take you, helpless kinsmen, fast and bound,  
And while ye lick my hand  
Lay bare your veins and nerves in one red wound,  
Divide the sentient brain ;  
And while the raw flesh quivers with the pain,  
A calm observer stand,  
And drop in some keen acid, and watch it bite  
The writhing life : wrench the still beating heart,  
And with calm voice meanwhile discourse, and bland,  
To boys who jeer or sicken as they gaze,  
Of the great Goddess Science and her gracious ways ?

Great Heaven ! this shall not be, this present hell,  
And none denounce it ; well I know, too well,  
That Nature works by ruin and by wrong,  
Taking no care for any but the strong,  
Taking no care. But we are more than she ;  
We touch to higher levels, a higher love  
Doth through our being move :  
Though we know all our benefits bought by blood,  
And that by suffering only reach we good ;  
Yet not with mocking laughter, nor in play,  
Shall we give death or carve a life away.  
And if it be indeed  
For some vast gain of knowledge, we might give  
These humble lives that live,  
And for the race should bid the victim bleed,  
Only for some great gain,  
Some counterpoise of pain ;  
And that with solemn soul and grave,  
Like his who from the fire 'scapes, or the flood,  
Who would save all, ay, with his heart's blood,  
But of his children chooses which to save !



Surely a man should scorn  
To owe his weal to others' death and pain ?  
Sure 'twere no real gain  
To batten on lives so weak and so forlorn ?  
Nor were it right indeed  
To do for others what for self were wrong.  
'Tis but the same dead creed,  
Preaching the naked triumph of the strong ;  
And for this Goddess Science, hard and stern,  
We shall not let her priests torment and burn ;  
We fought the priests before, and not in vain ;  
And as we fought before, so' will we fight again.

# Léon Cladel

1835-1909

## MY ASS

**T**HE cross was on his hide for all to see :  
A mangy skeleton, scarred, scabbed and bowed,  
Waiting the knacker's mercy. From the crowd  
Five shillings ransomed him. He lives with me.

My lawns are by his busy tongue caressed ;  
His eyes reflect the shadowy trees that grow  
Between the broad roofs and the sunset glow ;  
His patient sober body takes its rest.

When I draw near he welcomes me with glee,  
With solemn antics, with tempestuous brays,  
And pulsing nostrils sweet with lavender.

My little ass, be happy ! and be free !  
Eat, drink, and doze, enjoying all your days  
Honour and liberty and provender.

*Translated by* STELLA BROWNE.

# Giosuè Carducci

1836—1907.

## TO THE OX

**I** LOVE thee, pious Ox ; a 'gentle feeling  
Of vigour and of peace thou giv'st my heart.  
How solemn, like a monument, thou art !  
Over wide fertile fields thy calm gaze stealing,  
Unto the yoke with grave contentment kneeling,  
To man's quick work thou dost thy strength impart.  
He shouts and goads, and answering thy smart,  
Thou turn'st on him thy patient eyes appealing.  
From thy broad nostrils, black and wet, arise  
Thy breath's soft fumes ; and on the still air swells,  
Like happy hymn, thy lowing's mellow strain.  
In the grave sweetness of thy tranquil eyes  
Of emerald, broad and still reflected dwells  
All the divine green silence of the plain.

*Translated by* FRANK SEWALL.

# Giosuè Carducci

## TO A DONKEY

**O** ANCIENT patience, wherefore dost thou gaze  
Across the hedge upon the eastern skies,  
Through elder branches, o'er the flowery maze  
Of fragrant whitethorn with moist kindling eyes?  
Why dost thou bray to heaven with dolorous cries?  
Is it not Love, O rogue, that woos thy days?  
What memory scourges thee? What hope that flies  
Spurs on thy tired life down aching ways?  
Art dreaming of Arabian deserts free  
Where, match'd in rivalry of fortitude  
Thou with the steeds of Job did'st turn and flee?  
Or would'st thou fly to Hellas' solitude  
Calling on Homer, who doth liken thee  
To Telamonian Ajax unsubdued?

*Translated by MAUD HOLLAND.*

# Algernon Charles Swinburne

1837—1909.

## TO A SEAMEW

**W**HEN I had wings, my brother,  
Such wings were mine as thine  
Such life my heart remembers  
In all as wild Septembers  
As this when life seems other,  
Though sweet, than once was mine ;  
When I had wings, my brother,  
Such wings were mine as thine.

Such life as thrills and quickens  
The silence of thy flight,  
Or fills thy note's elation  
With lordlier exultation  
Than man's, whose faint heart sickens  
With hopes and fears that blight  
Such life as thrills and quickens  
The silence of thy flight.

Thy cry from windward clanging  
Makes all the cliffs rejoice ;  
Though storm clothe seas with sorrow,  
Thy call salutes the morrow ;  
While shades of pain seem hanging  
Round earth's most ray-turous voice,  
Thy cry from windward clanging  
Makes all the cliffs rejoice.

We, sons and sires of seamen,  
Whose home is all the sea,  
What place man may, we claim it ;  
But thine—whose thought may name it ?  
Free birds live higher than freemen,  
And gladlier ye than we—  
We, sons and sires of seamen,  
Whose home is all the sea.

For you the storm sounds only  
More notes of more delight  
Than earth's in sunniest weather :  
When heaven and sea together  
Join strengths against the lonely  
Lost bark borne down by night,  
For you the storm sounds only  
More notes of more delight.

With wider wing, and louder  
Long clarion-call of joy,  
Thy tribe salutes the terror  
Of darkness, wild as error,  
But sure as truth, and prouder  
Than waves with man for toy ;  
With wider wing, and louder  
Long clarion-call of joy.

The wave's wing spreads and flutters,  
The wave's heart swells and breaks ;  
One moment's passion thrills it,  
One pulse of power fulfils it  
And ends the pride it utters  
When, loud with life that quakes,  
The wave's wing spreads and flutters,  
The wave's heart swells and breaks.

But thine and thou, my brother,  
Keep heart and wing more high  
Than aught may scarce or sunder ;  
The waves whose throats are thunder  
Fall hurtling each on other,  
And triumph as they die ;  
But thine and thou, my brother,  
Keep heart and wing more high.

More high than wrath or anguish,  
More strong than pride or fear,  
The sense or soul half hidden  
In thee, for us forbidden,  
Bids thee, nor change nor languish,  
But live thy life as here,  
More high than wrath or anguish,  
More strong than pride or fear.

We are fallen, even we, whose passion  
On earth is nearest thine ;  
Who sing, and cease from flying ;  
Who live, and dream of dying :  
Grey time, in time's grey fashion,  
Bids wingless creatures pine :  
We are fallen, even we, whose passion  
On earth is nearest thine.

The lark knows no such rapture,  
Such joy no nightingale,  
As sways the songless measure  
Wherein thy wings take pleasure :  
Thy love may no man capture,  
Thy pride may no man quail ;  
The lark knows no such rapture,  
Such joy no nightingale.

And we, whom dreams embolden,  
We can but creep and sing  
And watch through heaven's waste hollow  
The flight no sight may follow  
To the utter bourne beholden  
Of none that lack thy wing :  
And we, whom dreams embolden,  
We can but creep and sing.

Our dreams have wings that falter,  
Our hearts' bear hopes that die ;  
For thee no dream could better  
A life no fears may fetter,  
A pride no care can alter,  
That wots not whence or 'why  
Our dreams have wings that falter,  
Our hearts bear hopes that die.  
With joy more fierce and sweeter  
Than joys we deem divine  
Their lives, by time untarnished,  
Are girt about and garnished,  
Who match the wave's full metre  
And drink the wind's wild wine  
With joy more fierce and sweeter  
Than joys we deem divine.

Ah, well were I for ever,  
Wouldst thou change lives with me,  
And take my song's wild honey,  
And give me back thy sunny  
Wide eyes that weary never,  
And wings that search the sea ;  
Ah, well were I for ever,  
Wouldst thou change lives with me.



# Algernon Charles Swinburne

## TO A CAT

### I

**S**TATELY, kindly, lordly friend,  
Condescend  
Here to sit by me, and turn  
Glorious eyes that smile and burn,  
Golden eyes, love's lustrous meed,  
On the golden page I read.

All your wondrous wealth of hair,  
Dark and fair,  
Silken—shaggy, soft and 'bright  
As the clouds and beams of night,  
Pays my reverent hand's caress  
Back with friendlier gentleness.

Dogs may fawn on all and some  
As they come ;  
You, a friend of loftier mind,  
Answer friends alone in kind.  
Just your foot upon my hand  
Softly bids it understand.

Morning round this silent sweet  
Garden-seat  
Sheds its wealth of gathering light,  
Thrills the gradual clouds with might,  
Changes woodland, orchard, heath,  
Lawn, and garden there beneath.

Fair and dim they gleamed below :  
    Now they glow  
Deep as even your sun-bright eyes,  
Fair as even the wakening skies,  
Can it not, or can it be  
    Now that you give thanks to see ?  
May not you rejoice, as I,  
    Seeing the sky  
Change to heaven revealed, and bid  
Earth reveal the heaven it hid  
All night long from stars and moon,  
    Now the sun sets all in tune ?  
What within you wakes with day,  
    Who can say ?  
All too little may we tell,  
Friends who like each other well,  
What might haply, if we might,  
    Bid us read our lives aright.

## II

Wild on woodland ways, your sires  
    Flashed like fires ;  
Fair as flame and fierce and fleet  
As with wings, on wingless feet  
Shone and sprang your mother, free  
    Bright and brave as wind or sea.  
Free and proud and glad as they,  
    Here to-day  
Rests or roams their radiant child,  
Vanquished not, but reconciled,  
Free from curb of aught above,  
    Save the lovely curb of love.

Love through dreams of souls divine  
    Fain would shine  
Round a dawn whose light and song  
Then should right our mutual wrong—  
Speak, and seal the love-lit law  
    Sweet Assisi's seer foresaw.

Dreams were theirs ; yet haply may  
    Dawn a day  
When such friends and fellows born,  
Seeing our earth as fair at morn,  
May for wiser love's sake, see  
    More of heaven's deep heart than we.

# Algernon Charles Swinburne

## AT A DOG'S GRAVE

### I

**G**OOD-night, we say, when comes the time  
to win  
The daily death divine that shuts up sight,  
Sleep, that assures for all who dwell therein  
Good-night.

The shadow shed round those we love shines bright  
As love's own face, when death, sleep's gentler twin,  
From them divides us even as night from light.

Shall friends born lower in life, though pure of sin,  
Though clothed with love and faith to usward plight,  
Perish and pass unbidden of us, their kin,  
Good-night ?

### II

To die a dog's death once was held for shame.  
Not all men so beloved and mourned shall lie  
As many of these, whose time untimely came  
To die.

His years were full : his years were joyous : why  
Must love be sorrow, when his gracious name  
Recalls his lovely life of limb and eye ?

If aught of blameless life on earth may claim  
Life higher than death, though death's dark wave  
    rise high,  
Such life as this among us never came  
    To die.

### III

White violets, there by hands 'more sweet than they  
    Planted, shall sweeten April's flowerful air  
About a grave that shows to night and day  
    White violets there.

A child's light hands, whose touch makes flowers  
    more fair,  
Keep fair as these for many a March and May  
The light of days that are because they were.

It shall not like a blossom pass away ;  
It broods and brightens with the days that ~~that~~ bear  
Fresh fruits of love, but leave, as love might pray,  
    White violets there.

# Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

1840.

## THE TOAD

**O** WHO shall tell us of the truth of things ?  
The day was ending blood-red in the west  
After a storm. The sun had smelted down  
As in a furnace all the clouds to gold.  
Upon a cart track by a pool of rain,  
Dumbly with calm eyes fixed upon the heavens,  
A toad sat thinking. It was wretchedness  
That gazed on majesty. Ah, who shall tell  
The very truth of things, the hidden law  
Of pain and ugliness ? Byzantium bred  
Growths of Augustuli, Great Rome her crimes,  
As Earth breeds flowers, the firmament its suns,  
And the toad too his crop of ulcerous sores.

The leaves turned purple on the vermeil trees ;  
The rain lay like a mirror in the ruts ;  
The dying sun shook his last banners out ;  
Birds sang in whispers, and the world grew dumb  
With the hush of evening and forgetfulness.  
Then too the toad forgot himself and all  
His daylight shame, as he looked out bright-eyed  
Into the sweet face of the coming night.  
For who shall tell ? He too the accursèd one  
Dreamt of a blessing. There is not a creature  
On whom the infinite heaven hath not smiled  
Wildly and tenderly ; no thing impure

Monstrous deformed and hideous but he holds  
The immensity of the starlight in his eyes.

A priest came by and saw the unholy thing,  
And with his foot, even as his prayers he read,  
Trod it aside and shuddered and went on.  
A woman with a wild flower in her bosom  
Came next and at the eye's light mirrored there  
Aimed her umbrella point. Now he was old  
And she was beautiful. Then home from school  
Ran four boys with young faces like the dawn.  
"I was a child, was weak, was pitiless":  
Thus must each man relate who would begin  
The true tale of his life. A child hath all,  
Joy, laughter, mirth. He is drunk with life's delight.  
Hope's day-star breaketh in his innocent eyes.  
He hath a mother. He is just a boy,  
A little man who breathes the 'untrammelled air  
Clean-winded and clean-limbed, and he is free  
And the world loves him. Why should he not then  
For lack of sorrow strike the sorrowful?

The toad dragged down the deep track of the road.  
It was the hour when from the hollows round  
Blue mists steal creeping low upon the fields.  
His wild heart sought the night. Just then the  
children

Came on the fugitive and all together  
Cried, "Let us kill him. We will punish him  
For being so ugly." And at the word they laughed.  
(For children laugh when they do murder.) Then  
They thrust at him with sticks and where the eye  
Bulged from its socket made a ghastlier wound  
Opening his sores. The passers by looked on,

And they too laughed. And then the night fell down  
Black on the blackness of his martyrdom  
Who was so dumb. And when the blood flowed out  
It was horrible blood. And he was horrible.  
That was his crime.

And still along the lane  
The creature sprawled. One foot had been shorn  
away  
By a child's spade, and at each new blow aimed  
Its jaws foamed blood, poor damned suffering thing,  
Which even when the sun had soothed its hide  
Had skulked in holes. And the children mocked the  
more :  
“ Wretch. Would you spit at us ? ”

O strange child's heart !  
What rage is thine to pluck thus at the robe  
Of misery and taunt it with its pain ?

And so from clod to clod, from briar to briar,  
But breathing still, in his dull fear he fled  
Seeking a shelter from their tyrannous eyes.  
So mean a thing it seemed Death shrank from him  
Refusing aid of his all-pitying scythe.  
And the children followed on with rushes noosed  
To take him, but he slipped between their hands  
And fell, so changed it, where the rut gaped deepest,  
Into a mire of mud ; cool hiding place  
It was and refuge for his mangled limbs,  
And there he quaking lay. The anointing slime  
Soothed his hurt body like a sacrament,  
An extreme unction for his utter need.  
Nor yet was safety won. The children's eyes,



Abominable eyes, were on him still  
With their hard mirth. "Is there no stone?" they  
cried,  
"To end him with? Here, Jeremiah, Jim,  
Lend us a hand." And willing hands were lent.

Once more, O child of Man! I ask it. Say  
What is the goal of thy desire? What aim  
Is thine? What target wouldst thou hit? What  
win?  
Say. Is it death or life?

The stone was brought,  
A ponderous mass, broad as a paving flag,  
But light in his young hands that bore it in,  
Pride giving strength to lift, and the lust to kill.  
"You shall see what this will do," the young giant  
cried.  
And all stood near expectant of the end.

And then a new thing happened, a new chance.  
A coster's dray, drawn by an ancient ass,  
Passed down the lane. With creaking wheels it came  
And slow harsh jolts in the ruts. The ass was lean  
And stiff with age, spavined, with foundered feet,  
And dead to blows which rained on his dull hide.  
Each step he stumbled. He was near his home,  
After a long day's labour in the field,  
And began to scent his stable while the cart  
Lagged in the ruts, or with shafts forward thrown  
Pressed his galled sides and thrust its load on him,  
At the downward slope, where the lane left the hill,  
More than his strength. A mist was in his eyes  
And that dull stupor which foreshadows death.

Thus the cart moved, its driver cursing loud,  
Its driven dumb, while the whip cracked in time.  
The ass was in his dreams beyond our thought,  
Plunged in those depths of soul where no man strays.

And the children heard the cart upon the road.  
It gave them a new thought. And "Stop," they cried,  
"Let the stone be. We shall have better sport  
Here with the wheels. This ass will do the thing."  
And they stood aside and watched what next should  
come.

And the cart drew near, its wheels sunk in the rut  
Where the toad lay, the ass with his dull eyes  
Fixed on the path before him, his head down  
Nosing the ground in apathy of thought.  
And the ass stopped. He, the sad slave of pain,  
Had seen the vision of a sadder slave  
Needing his pity, and being as it were the judge  
To save or slay he had been moved to grace;  
He had seen and understood. And, gathering up  
In a single act supreme of his poor weakness  
All that remained to him of combative pride,  
He made the grand refusal, mastering  
By his last strength the load which pressed on him  
With terrible connivance of the hill,  
And wrenched the cart wheel from its track of doom  
Spite of his tyrant's voice of blasphemy  
And its mad curses and his own huge pain,  
And so, the victory won, passed on his road.

Then also was it that that child with the stone,  
He who now tells this story, from his hands  
Let the flag drop. A voice had cried to him  
Too loud for denial: "Fool. Be merciful."

O wisdom of the witless ! Law of pity  
Loud on the lips of pain. Nature's pure light  
Lightening the darkness of Man's gulfs of crime !  
Lessons of courage taught by coward hearts,  
Of joy by the joyless ! Eyes that cannot weep  
Pleading with grief and pointing consolation !  
The eloquent call of one poor damnèd soul  
Preaching to souls elect, the beast to man !  
Know this.: hours are there, twilight hours of grace,  
When, be he what he may, beast, bird or slave,  
Each living thing gets glimpses of God's heaven  
And knows himself own brother to the stars,  
Being one with these in ancestry of love,  
Kindred in kindness. Learn that this poor ass,  
Facing his pain rather than add to pain,  
Was master of his soul in verier deed  
Than Socrates was saint, than Plato sage.

Who is the teacher here ? O man of mind !  
Wouldst thou touch truth ? The true truth in thee  
    lies,  
Thy lack of light. Nay, kneel, weep, pray, believe,  
Grovel on the Earth. She shall thy teacher be.  
A corner of their Heaven thou too shalt win  
When thou art dust with these. Then shalt thou too  
Get glimpses of their world's ingenuous dawn  
And purchase back thy soul's lost purity,  
The love that casts out fear and conquers pain,  
The link which binds its weak ones with its strong  
And equals all in one divine accord,  
The unknowing ass with the all-knowing God.

# Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

## THE STRICKEN HART

**T**HE stricken hart had fled the brake,  
His courage spent for life's dear sake.  
He came to die beside the lake.

The golden trout leaped up to view,  
The moorfowl clapped his wings and crew,  
The swallow brushed him as she flew.

He looked upon the glorious sun,  
His blood dropped slowly on the stone,  
He loved the life so nearly won,

And then he died. The ravens found  
A carcase couched upon the ground,  
They said their god had dealt the wound.

The Eternal Father calmly shook  
One page untitled from life's book.  
Few words. None ever cared to look.

Yet woe for life thus idly riven.  
He blindly loved what God had given,  
And love, some say, has conquered Heaven.

# Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

## ASSASSINS

**A**SSASSINS find accomplices. Man's merit  
Has found him three, the hawk, the hound,  
the ferret.

# Thomas Hardy

1840.

## WAGTAIL AND BABY

**A** BABY watched a ford, whereto  
A wagtail came for drinking;  
A blaring bull went wading through,  
The wagtail showed no shrinking.

A stallion splashed his way across,  
The birdie nearly sinking;  
He gave his plumes a twitch and toss,  
And held his own unblinking.

Next saw the baby round the spot  
A mongrel slowly slinking;  
The wagtail gazed, but faltered not  
In dip and sip and prinking.

A perfect gentleman then neared;  
The wagtail, in a winking  
With terror rose and disappeared;  
The baby fell a-thinking.

# Thomas Hardy

## THE PUZZLED GAME-BIRDS

**T**HEY are not those who used to feed us  
When we were young—they cannot be—  
These shapes that now bereave and bleed  
us ?

They are not those who used to feed us,—  
For would they not fair terms concede us ?  
—If hearts can house such treachery  
They are not those who used to feed us  
When we were young—they cannot be !

# Thomas Hardy

## THE BLINDED BIRD

**S**O zestfully canst thou sing ?  
And all this indignity,  
With God's consent, on thee !  
Blinded ere yct a-wing  
By the red-hot needle thou,  
I stand and wonder how  
So zestfully thou canst sing !

Resenting not such wrong,  
Thy grievous pain forgot,  
Eternal dark thy lot,  
Groping thy whole life long,  
After that stab of fire ;  
Enjailed in pitiless wire ;  
Resenting not such wrong !

Who hath charity ? This bird.  
Who suffereth long and is kind,  
Is not provoked, though blind  
And alive ensepulchred ?  
Who hopeth, endureth all things ?  
Who thinketh no evil, but sings ?  
Who is divine ? This bird.



# Robert Buchanan

1841—1902.

## GOD EVOLVING

**T**URN from the mirage of a God on high  
Holding the sceptre of a creed outworn,  
And hearken to the faint half-human cry  
Of Nature quickening with the God unborn !

The God unborn, the God that is to be,  
The God that has not been since Time began,—  
Hark,—that low sound of Nature's agony  
Echoed thro' life and the hard heart of Man !

Fed with the blood and tears of living things,  
Nourish'd and strengthen'd by Creation's woes,  
The God unborn, that shall be King of Kings,  
Sown in the darkness, thro' the darkness grows.

Alas, the long slow travail and the pain  
Of her who bears him in her mighty womb !  
How long ere he shall live and breathe and reign,  
While yonder Phantom fades to give him room ?

Where'er great pity is and piteousness,  
Where'er great Love and Love's strange sorrow stay,  
Where'er men cease to curse, but bend to bless,  
Frail brethren fashion'd like themselves of clay,

Where'er the lamb and lion side by side  
Lie down in peace, where'er on land or sea  
Infinite Love and Mercy heavenly-eyed  
Emerge, there 'stirs the God that is to be !

His light is round the slaughter'd bird and beast,  
As round the forehead of Man crucified,—  
All things that live, the greatest and the least,  
Await the coming of this Lord and Guide ;

And every gentle deed by mortals done,  
Yea every holy thought and loving breath,  
Lighten poor Nature's travail with this Son  
Who shall be Lord and God of Life and Death !

No God behind us in the empty Vast,  
No God enthroned on yonder heights above,  
But God emerging, and evolved at last  
Out of the inmost heart of human Love !

Wound Love, thou woundest, too, this God unborn !  
Of Love and Love's compassion is he bred !  
His strength the grace that holds no thing in scorn,  
His very blood the tears by Pity shed !

And every cruel thought or deed on earth  
Yea, even blood-sacrifice on bended knee,  
Lengthens the travail and delays the birth  
Of this our God, the God that is to be !

# Robert Buchanan

## MAN OF THE RED RIGHT HAND

**M**AN with the Red Right Hand knelt in the  
night and prayed.  
“Pity and spare, O God, the mortal whom  
thou hast made !

Strengthen the house he builds, adorn his glad roof-  
tree,

Blessing the bloody spoil he gathers on earth and  
sea !

The bird and the beast are blind, and they do not  
understand,

But lo ! thy servant kneels !” said Man with the  
Red Right Hand !

God went by in the storm and answered never, a  
word.

But the birds of the air shrieked loud, and the beasts  
of the mountain heard,

And the dark sad flocks of the Sea, and the Sea-lambs  
gentle-eyed

Wail’d from their oozy folds, and the mild Sea-kine  
replied,

And the pity of God fell down, like darkness on sea  
and land,

But froze to ice in the heart of Man with the Red  
Right Hand.

Then up he rose from his knee, and brandish'd the  
crimson knife,  
Saying, " I thank thee, God, for making me Lord  
of Life ! "  
The beasts and the birds are mine, and the flesh  
and blood of the same,  
Baptized in the blood of these, I gladden and praise  
thy name !  
Laden with spoils of life thy servant shall smiling  
stand ! "  
And out on the deep he hied, this Man with the Red  
Right Hand.

Afar on the lonely isles the cry of the slaughtered  
herds  
Rose on the morning air, to the scream of the flying  
birds,  
And the birds fell down and bled with pitiful human  
cries,  
And the butcher'd Lambs of the Sea look up with  
pleading eyes,  
And the blood of bird and beast was red on the sea  
and land,  
And drunk with the joy of Death was Man with the  
Red Right Hand.

And the fur of the slain sea-lamb was a cloak for  
his bride to wear,  
And the broken wing of the bird was set in his leman's  
hair,  
And the flesh of the ox and lamb were food for his  
brood to eat,  
And the skin of the mild sea kine was shoon on his  
daughters' feet !

And the cry of the slaughtered things was loud over  
  sea and land  
As he knelt once more and prayed, upraising his  
  Red Right Hand.

“Pity me Master and Lord ! spare me and pass me  
  by, .

Grant me Eternal Life, though the beast and the  
  bird must die !

Behold I worship thy Law, and gladden in all thy  
  ways,

The bird and the beast are dumb, but behold I sing  
  thy praise,

The bird and the beast are blind, and they do not  
  understand,

But lo, I see and know ! ” said Man with the Red  
  Right Hand.

God went by in the Storm and answered never a  
  word.

But deep in the soul of Man the cry of a God was  
  heard.

“Askest thou pity, *thou*, who ne’er drew pitying  
  breath ?

Askest thou fulness of life, whose life is built upon  
  Death ?

Even as thou metest to these, thy kin of the sea  
  and land,

Shall it be meted to *thee*, O Man of the Red Right  
  Hand !

When thou namest bird and beast, and blessest them  
  passing by,

When thy pleasure is built no more on the pain of  
  things that die,

When thy bride no longer wears the spoil of thy  
butcher's knife,  
Perchance thy prayer may reach the ears of the Lord  
of Life ;  
Meantime be slain with the things thou slayest on  
sea and land,—  
Yea, pass in thy place like those, O Man with the  
Red Right Hand."

# Richard Jefferies

1848—1887.

## MY CHAFFINCH

**H**IS hours he spends upon a fragrant fir ;  
His merry “ chink,” his happy “ Kiss me,  
dear,”

Each moment sounded, keeps the copse astir.

Loudly he challenges each rival near,  
Anon aslant down to the ground he springs,  
Like to a sunbeam made of coloured wings.

The firm and solid azure of the ceil

That struck by hand would give a ~~bell~~ow sound,  
A dome turned perfect by the sun's great wheel,

Whose edges rest upon the hills around,  
Rings many a mile with blue enamelled wall ;  
His fir tree is the centre of it all.

A lichen'd cup he set against the side

High up this mast, earth-stepped, that could not fail,  
But swung a little as a ship might ride,

Keeping an easy balance in the gale ;  
Slow-heaving like a gladiator's breast,  
Whose strength in combat feels an idle rest.

Whether the cuckoo or the chaffinch most

Do triumph in the issuing of their song ?  
I say not this, but many a swelling boast

They throw each at the other all day long.  
Soon as the nest had cradled eggs ~~and~~  
The jolly squirrel climbed to look therein.

Adown the lane athwart this pleasant wood  
The broad-winged butterflies their solace sought ;  
A green-necked pheasant in the sunlight stood,  
Nor could the rushes hide him as he thought.  
A humble-bee through fern and thistle made  
A search for lowly flowers in the shade.

A thing of many wanderings, and loss,  
Like to Ulysses on his poplar raft,  
His treasure hid beneath the tunnelled moss  
Lest that a thief his labour steal with craft,  
Up the round hill, sheep-dotted, was his way,  
Zigzagging where some new adventure lay.

“ My life and soul,” as if he were a Greek,  
His heart was Grecian in his greenwood fane ;  
“ My life and soul,” through all the sunny week  
The chaffinch sang with beating heart amain.  
“ The humble-bee the wide wood-world may roam ;  
One feather’s breadth I shall not stir from home.”

No note he took of what the swallows said  
About the firing of some evil gun,  
Nor if the butterflies were blue or red,  
For all his feelings were intent in one.  
The loving soul, a-thrill in all his nerves,  
A life immortal as a man’s deserves.



# Henry S. Salt

. b. 1851.

## VOICES OF THE VOICELESS

**T**HE fields were full of summer sound ;  
The lambs were gaily bleating ;  
Small birds were gossiping around,  
“ Their joyful news repeating ;  
In tones vociferously clear,  
Rooks chatted overhead.  
“ *Sweet creatures ! How I love to hear  
Dumb animals,*” she said.

And as they parleyed, each with each,  
Their thoughts and fancies showing,  
It seemed as if some flood of speech  
This earth were overflowing ;  
Methought with every breath that moved  
A gift of tongues was shed.  
“ *How beautiful ! I’ve always loved  
Dumb animals,*” she said.

# Henry S. Salt

## IN MEMORIAM

**T**WO years—two years ! And is it then so long  
Since thou wert reft away ?  
Yet still thy memory lingers fresh and strong ;  
It seems but yesterday  
That thou wast here, ere that dark time befell,  
A happy friend 'mid friends that loved thee well.

Two years—two years ! And still I weep whene'er  
Thine image I recall ;  
Swift hurrying feet, sharp bark, long silken hair,  
And, dearest far of all,  
Thy gentle, loving eyes, that looked no less  
Than human sympathy and tenderness.

Two years—two years ! And still, as time flies fast,  
Must year to year succeed.  
They cannot change the fixed, abiding Past ;  
They cannot shake my creed,  
That, chance what may in earth or heaven above,  
There never dies the least small spark of Love.

# H. D. Rawnsley

1851-1920.

## THE SQUIRREL

**L**IGHT-HEARTED dweller in the voiceless  
wood,  
Pricking thy tasselled ears in hope to tell  
Where under, in thy haste, the acorn fell;  
Now for excess of summer in thy blood,  
Running through all thy tricky change of mood,  
Or vaulting upward to thy citadel  
To seek the mossy nest, thy miser-cell,  
And chuckle o'er the winter's hoard ~~of food~~.  
Miser? I do thee wrong to call thee so,  
For, from the swinging larch-plumes overhead,  
In showers of whispering music thou dost shed  
Gold, thick as dust, where'er thy light feet go:  
Keep, busy Almoner, thy gifts of gold!  
Be still! mine eyes ask only to behold.

# H. D. Rawnsley

## PIGEON SHOOTING AT AMBLESIDE

### A PROTEST

**A**BOVE the shooters, at their coward play,  
Beyond the leaden drifts of murderous hail,  
On higher wing the homeward Rookey sail,  
And clamour hoarse, loud protest and dismay;  
Indignant valleys echo far away,  
“Pity is dead and prayer of no avail!”  
The soft-winged prisoner dies before the pale,  
Or dropped beyond, shall bleed another day.  
Was it to sanction death and banish love  
The Olive-bearer to the Ark returned?  
Did God descend in likeness of a Dove  
That men, in sport, might take the life they spurned?  
So vainly, all the years in cote and grove  
Have these, unpitied, mourned, and mourned, and  
mourned.

# H. D. Rawnsley

## THE STAG IMPALED

**W**ITH head drawn back and heaving flank  
distressed  
It hears the hounds—the hunter's bugle  
ring,

What hand shall save the tame unantlered thing,  
What covert give the harmless creature rest?  
Down the long vale, and o'er the woodland crest,  
Across the flood, with pitcous fear for wing,  
It speeds, then leaps, and with a desperate spring  
Hangs mute, impaled, the fence-spear in its breast.

When shall the heart of gentler England prove  
Its pure compassion for all needless pain;  
When shall we learn the bond of brotherhood  
'Twixt man and these wild creatures of the wood,  
And nobler days of sport bring nobler gain,  
For manhood sworn to pity and to love?

# W. H. Hudson

## THE LONDON SPARROW

**A** HUNDRED years it seemeth since I lost thee,  
O beautiful world of birds, O blessèd birds,  
That come and go !—the thrush, the golden-bill  
That sweetly fluteth after April rain,  
In forest depths the cuckoo's mystic voice,  
And in the breezy fields the yellow-hammer,  
And over all the mounting lark, that makes  
The blue heaven palpitate with ecstasy !  
Nor in this island only : far beyond  
The seas encircling it swift memory flies  
To other brighter lands, and leaves behind  
The swallow and the dove : in hot sweet woods  
The gaudy parrot screams ; reedy and vast  
Stretch ibis and flamingo-haunted marshes.

I from such worlds removed to this sad world  
Of London we inhabit now together,  
O Sparrow, often in my loneliness,  
No other friend remaining, turn to thee,  
Like some imprisoned wretch, who in his cell  
A cricket hears, and listening to its chirp,  
Forgets the vanished sunshine and the laughter.  
Not oft, O wingèd Ark of the streets,  
Thou dusty little scavenger—a bird  
Ambitious bard should blush to name—not oft

Canst claim such victory : for I have known  
The kings and glorious nobles of the race  
Whose homely mean ambassador thou art ;  
Imperial-crested birds in purple clothed  
And splendid scarlet, swans in bridal white,  
And many a rainbow-tinted tanager.

Ah ! how couldst thou thy birthright, liberty  
In breezy woodlands, where were springs for thirst  
And many-flavoured fruits to feed upon,  
Resign for such a place ?—to live long years  
From nature sweet in exile voluntary,  
Nourished on mouldy crumbs, ignoble bird !  
Imprisoned in a lurid atmosphere  
That maketh all things black and desolate,  
Until, as in a coin illegible  
To keenest Antiquary, lost are all  
The signs that mark thy kind—the pretty gloss  
That Nature gave thee clouded and confounded,  
Till to the ornithologist thou art  
A bird ambiguous : to others, too,  
A thing offensive. Sometimes even I,  
Aroused to fury by thy barrel-organ  
That puts my thoughts to flight, would gladly 'hale  
thee  
Before the magistrate. For thou hast not  
The coyness of thy kind—for awful man  
No veneration ; noisy, impudent,  
Begrimed with soot, the chimney-sweep of birds  
To minds æsthetic.

Roughly have I used  
The liberty of a friend, and yet I know  
I love thee, Sparrow, and thy voice to

A dweller once in summer-lands—brings back  
Responsive joy, as unto him that walks,  
Pensive at eventide, the robin's song  
'Midst wintry loneliness. Oh, my lost Muse,  
If aught of thy sweet spirit is remaining  
After my long neglect, in gratitude  
To this my frequent, welcome visitor,  
Whose little pipe from out discordant noises  
Springs like a flower amidst a waste of rocks  
To cheer my exile, I will strike again  
The quaint and rust-corroded instrument  
I played of yore, and to the Sparrow sing  
My latest song, albeit now the chords  
Give 'neath my touch an unfamiliar sound  
To sadden me—the note of time and change.

At dawn thy voice is loud—a merry voice  
When other sounds are few and faint. Before  
The muffled thunders of the Underground  
Begin to shake the houses, and the noise  
Of eastward traffic fills the thoroughfares,  
Thy voice then welcomes day. Oh what a day!—  
How foul and haggard-faced! See, where she comes  
In garments of the chill discoloured mists  
Stealing unto the west with noiseless foot  
Through dim forsaken streets. Is she not like,  
As sister is to sister, unto her  
Whose stained cheeks the nightly rains have wet  
And made them grey and seamed and desolate,  
Beneath the arches of the bitter bridge?  
And thou, O Sparrow, from the windy ledge  
Where thou dost nestle—creaking chimney-pots  
For softly-sighing branches; sooty slates  
For leaky canopy; rank steam of slums



For flowery fragrance, and for star-lit woods  
 This waste that frights, a desert desolate  
 Of fabrics gaunt and grim and smoke-begrimed,  
 By goblin misery haunted, scowling towers  
 Of cloud and stone, gigantic tenements  
 And castles of despair, by spectral glooms  
 Of fitful lamps illumined,—from such place  
 Canst thou, O Sparrow, welcome day so foul ?  
 Ay, not more blithe of heart in forests dim  
 The golden-throated thrush awakes, what time  
 The leaves a-tremble whisper to the breath,  
 The flowery breath, of morning azure-eyed !  
 Never a morning comes but I do bless thee,  
 Thou brave and faithful Sparrow, living link  
 That binds us to the immemorial past,  
 O blithe heart in a house so melancholy,  
 And keeper for a thousand gloomy years  
 Of many a gay tradition, heritor  
 Of Nature's ancient cheerfulness, for thee  
 'Tis ever Merry England ! Never yet,  
 In thy companionship of centuries  
 With man in lurid London, didst regret  
 Thy valiant choice,—yea, even from the time  
 When all its low-roofed rooms were sweet with scent  
 From summer fields, where shouting children pluck  
 The floating lily from the reedy Fleet,  
 Scaring away the timid water-hen.

Awake at morn when still the wizard Sleep  
 Refracts from twilight mists the broken rays  
 Of consciousness, I hear thy lulling voice,  
 Like water softly warbling, or like wind  
 That wanders in the ancient moonlit trees.  
 And lo, with breezy feet I roam abroad ;

Before me startled from the shadowy fern  
Upsprings the antlered deer and flees away,  
And moors before me open measureless  
Whereon I seek for Morning washed in dews  
Immaculate. To other realms I fly  
To wait its coming, walking where the palms  
Unmoving stand like pillars that uphold  
Some hoary vast cathedral. Lift my heart  
To thee, O holy daughter of the sun—  
Sweet harbinger—the Dawn! The stars grow pale,  
And I am fainting by the way, oppressed  
With incense from a thousand forest flowers  
All prescient of thy coming! Lo, how vast,  
From mist and cloud the awful mountains rise  
Where ever up with incorporeal feet  
I climb to meet the dead Peruvian's god!  
O, swift approaching glory, blind me not  
With shafts ineffable! But re-awake  
In me the sacred passion of the past,  
Long quenched in blood by spirits uninformed  
That slew thy worshippers! My senses swim,—  
Sustain, or bear me back to earth! My feet  
Scarce feel the rolling cloud, or touch they still  
The awful summit of the world? Far, far  
Beneath, the dark blue ocean moves, the waves  
Lift up their lightning crests; the lonely earth  
Is jubilant; the rivers laugh; the hills  
In forests clothed, or soaring crowned with snow  
In barren everlasting majesty,  
Are all in gold and purple swathed for joy  
That thou art coming!

Vanished is my dream;  
Even while I bowed and veiled my eyes before

' The insufferable splendour of the sun  
It vanished quite, and left me with this pale,  
This phantom morning! With my dream thou  
fled'st,  
O blithe remembrancer, and in thy flight  
Callest thy prattling fellows, prompters too  
Of dreams perchance, from many a cloudy roof  
To flit, a noisy rain of sparrows, down  
To snatch a hasty breakfast from the roads,  
Undaunted by the thund'rous noise and motion:  
But like the petrel—fearless, fitful seeker,  
The fluctuating bird with ocean's wastes  
And rage familiar, tossed with tossing billows—  
So, gleaner unregarded, flittest thou—  
Now, as of old, and in the years to come,  
Nature's one witness, till the murmuring sound  
Of human feet unnumbered, like the rain  
Of summer pattering on the forest leaves,  
Fainter and fainter falling 'midst the ruin,  
In everlasting silence dies away.

# Edwin Markham

1852.

## THE LIZARD

I SIT among the hoary trees  
With Aristotle on my knees,  
And turn with serious hand the pages  
Lost in the cobweb-hush of ages ;  
When suddenly with no more sound  
Than any sunbeam on the ground,  
The little hermit of the place  
Is peering up into my face—  
The slim gray hermit of the rocks,  
With bright, inquisitive, quick eyes,  
His life a round of harks and shocks,  
A little ripple of surprise.

Now lifted up, intense and still,  
Sprung from the silence of the hill  
He hangs upon the ledge a-glisten,  
And his whole body seems to listen !  
My pages give a little start  
And he is gone ! to be a part  
Of the old cedar's crumpled bark  
A mottled scar, a weather-mark !

How halt am I, how mean of birth,  
Beside this darting pulse of earth !  
I only have the wit to look  
Into a big presumptuous book,

To find some sage's rigid plan  
To tell me how to be a man.  
Tradition lays its dead hand cold  
Upon our youth—and we are old.  
But this wise hermit, this grey friar,  
He has no law but heart's desire.  
He somehow touches higher truth,  
The circle of eternal youth.

# Edwin Markham

## A FRIEND OF THE FIELDS

BIRTHDAY GREETING TO JOHN BURROUGHS

**O**LD neighbour of the fields "Good day!  
"Good morrow!" too, upon the way.  
Boon fellow of the forest folk,  
Close confidant of the reticent oak,  
Oh, be it long till your "Good-bye!"  
To friendships of the earth and sky.

Go on with Life another mile,  
Lighting the way with kindly smile.  
Here is the Blue Jay with his brag,  
And here your friend, the faithful Crag;  
Here dwells your sister, the Bright Stream  
To sing her dream into your dream—  
All the meek things that love the ground,  
And live their days without a sound;  
All the shy tenantry that fill  
The holes and shelters of the hill;  
And all the bright quick things that fly  
Under the cavern of this sky.

You find the friendships of the glen  
More constant than the oaths of men.  
Yet bear another while with towns,  
The push of crowds, the praise of clowns.

Stay yet a little longer—stay  
To tell us what the blackbirds say ;  
To hear the cricket wind his horn,  
And call back summer to the corn ;  
To watch the dauntless butterfly  
Sail the green field, her nether sky ;  
To hear, when mountain darkness falls,  
The owl's word in his windy halls.

Stay yet a little longer here  
To bind the yellow of the year,  
To hōard the beauty of the rōse,  
To spread the gossip of the crows,  
To watch the wild geese shake the sedge,  
Or split the sky with moving wedge,  
To eavesdrop at the muskrat's door  
For bulletins of weather lore,  
To tell us by what craft the bees  
Heap' honey in communal trees,  
And by what sure theodolite  
They gage the angles of their flight,  
Still preach to us uncheerful men  
The sunny gossip of the wren ;  
And tell us for another while  
Of Earth's serene, sustaining smile.  
Bear with us till you must be gone  
To walk with White and Audubon.

# Toru Dutt

1856—1877.

## THE ROYAL ASCETIC AND THE HIND

**W**ITH a mind fixed intently on his gods,  
Long reigned in Saligram of ancient fame,  
The mighty monarch of the wide, wide  
world.

Chief of the virtuous, never in his life  
Harmed he, or strove to harm, his fellow-man,  
Or any creature sentient. But he left  
His kingdom in the forest-shades to dwell,  
And changed his sceptre for a hermit's staff,  
And with ascetic rites, privations rude,  
And constant prayers, endeavoured to attain  
Perfect dominion o'er his soul. At morn,  
Fuel, and flowers, and fruit, and holy grass,  
He gathered for oblations ; and he passed  
In stern devotions all his other hours ;  
Of the world heedless, and its myriad cares,  
And heedless too of wealth, and love, and fame.

Once on a time, while living thus, he went  
To bathe where through the wood the river flows :  
And his ablutions done, he sat him down  
Upon the shelving bank to muse and pray.  
Thither impelled by thirst a graceful hind,  
Big with its young, came fearlessly to drink.  
Sudden, while yet she drank, the lion's roar  
Feared by all creatures, like a thunder-clap



Burst in that solitude from a thicket nigh.  
Startled, the hind leapt up, and from her womb  
Her offspring tumbled in the rushing stream.  
Whelmed by the hissing waves and carried far  
By the strong current swoln by recent rain,  
The tiny thing still struggled for its life,  
While its poor mother, in her fright and pain,  
Fell down upon the bank, and breathed her last.  
Up rose the hermit-monarch at the sight,  
Full of keen anguish ; with his pilgrim-staff  
He drew the new-born creature from the wave ;  
'Twas panting fast but life was in it still.  
Now, as he saw its luckless mother dead,  
He would not leave it in the woods alone,  
But with the tenderest pity brought it home.

There in his leafy hut he gave it food,  
And daily nourished it with patient care,  
Until it grew in stature and in strength,  
And to the forest skirts could venture forth  
In search of sustenance. At early morn  
Thenceforth it used to leave the hermitage,  
And with the shades of evening come again,  
And in the little courtyard of the hut  
Lie down in peace, unless the tigers fierce,  
Prowling about, compelled it to return  
Earlier at noon. But whether near or far,  
Wandering abroad, or, resting in its home,  
The monarch-hermit's heart was with it still,  
Bound by affection's ties ; nor could he think  
Of anything besides this little hind,  
His nursling. Though a kingdom he had left,  
And children, and a host of loving friends,  
Almost without a tear, the fount of love

Sprang out anew within his blighted heart,  
 To greet this dumb, weak, helpless foster-child.  
 And so, whene'er it lingered in the wilds  
 Or at the 'customed hour could not return,  
 His thoughts went with it; and "Alas!" he cried,  
 "Who knows perhaps some lion or some wolf,  
 Or ravenous tiger with relentless jaws  
 Already hath devoured it,—timid thing!  
 Lo, how the earth is dinted with its hoofs,  
 And variegated. Surely for my joy  
 It was created. When will it come back,  
 And rub its budding antlers on my arms  
 In token of its love and deep delight  
 To see my face? The shaven stalks of grass,  
 Kusha and kasha, by its new teeth clipped,  
 Remind me of it, as they stand in lines  
 Like pious boys who chant the Samga Veds  
 Shorn by their vows of all their wealth of hair."  
 Thus passed the monarch-hermit's time; in joy,  
 With smiles upon his lips, whenever near  
 His little favourite; in bitter grief  
 And fear, and trouble, when it wandered far.  
 And he who had abandoned ease and wealth,  
 And friends and dearest ties, and kingly power,  
 Found his devotions broken by the love  
 He had bestowed upon a little hind  
 Thrown in his way by chance. Years glided on  
 And Death, who spareth none, approached at last  
 The hermit-king to summon him away;  
 The hind was at his side, with tearful eyes  
 Watching his last sad moments, like a child  
 Beside a father. He too watched and watched  
 His favourite through a blinding film of tears,  
 And could not think of the Beyond at hand,

So keen he felt the parting, such deep grief  
O'erwhelmed him for the creature he had reared.  
To it devoted was his last, last thought,  
Reckless of present and of future both !

*From the Vishnu Purana (Book II, chap. 13).*

# John Davidson

1857—1909.

## A RUNNABLE STAG

**W**HEN the pods went pop on the broom,  
green broom,  
And apples began to be golden-skinned,  
We harboured a stag in the Priory coomb,  
And we feathered his trail up-wind, up-wind,  
We feathered his trail up-wind—  
A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,  
A runnable stag, a kingly crop,  
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,  
A stag, a runnable stag.

Then the huntsman's horn rang yap, yap, yap,  
And "Forwards" we heard the harbourer shout;  
But 'twas only a brocket that broke a gap  
In the beechen underwood, driven out,  
From the underwood antlered out  
By warrant and might of the stag, the stag,  
The runnable stag, whose lordly mind  
Was bent on sleep, though beamed and tined  
He stood, a runnable stag.

So we tufted the covert till afternoon  
With Tinkerman's Pup and Bell-of-the-North;  
And hunters were sulky and hounds out of tune  
Before we tufted the right stag forth,  
Before we tufted him forth,

The stag of warrant, the wily stag,  
The runnable stag with his kingly crop,  
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,  
The royal and runnable stag.

It was Bell-of-the-North and Tinkerman's Pup  
That stuck to the scent till the copse was drawn.  
"Tally ho ! tally ho !" and the hunt was up,  
The tufters whipped and the pack laid on,  
The resolute pack laid on,  
And the stag of warrant away at last,  
The runnable stag, the same, the same,  
His hoofs on fire, his horns like flame,  
A stag, a runnable stag.

"Let your gelding be : if you check or chide  
He stumbles at once and you're out of the hunt ;  
For three hundred gentlemen, able to ride,  
On hunters accustomed to bear the brunt ;  
Accustomed to bear the brunt,  
Are after the runnable stag, the stag,  
The runnable stag with his kingly crop,  
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,  
The right, the runnable stag."

By perilous paths in coomb and dell,  
The heather, the rocks, and the river-bed,  
The pace grew hot, for the scent lay well,  
And a runnable stag goes right ahead,  
The quarry went right ahead—  
Ahead, ahead, and fast and far,  
His antlered crest, his cloven hoof,  
Brow, bay and tray and three aloof,  
The stag, the runnable stag.

For a matter of twenty miles and more,  
By the densest hedge and the highest wall,  
Through herds of bullocks he baffled the lore  
Of harbourer, huntsman, hounds and all,  
Of harbourer, hounds and all—  
The stag of warrant, the wily stag,  
For twenty miles, and five and five,  
He ran, and he never was caught alive,  
This stag, this runnable stag.

When he turned at bay in the leafy gloom,  
In the emerald gloom where the brook ran deep,  
He heard in the distance the rollers boom,  
And he saw in a vision of peaceful sleep,  
In a wonderful vision of sleep,  
A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,  
A runnable stag in a jewelled bed,  
Under the sheltering ocean dead,  
A stag, a runnable stag.

So a fateful hope lit up his eye,  
And he opened his nostrils wide again,  
And he tossed his branching antlers high,  
As he headed the hunt down the Charlock glen,  
As he raced down the echoing glen,  
For five miles more, the stag, the stag,  
For twenty miles, and five and five,  
Not to be caught now, dead or alive,  
The stag, the runnable stag.

Three hundred gentlemen, able to ride,  
Three hundred horses as gallant and free,  
Beheld him escape on the evening tide,  
Far out till he sank in the Severn Sea,

Till he sank in the depths of the sea-  
The stag, the buoyant stag, the stag  
That slept at last in a jewelled bed  
Under the sheltering ocean spread,  
The stag, the runnable stag.

# Edmond Haraucourt

b. 1857.

## THE CABHORSE

**S**LIPPING upon the ice, allwhither : night and  
day,  
Sweating beneath the sun and dripping in the  
rain,  
Panting, his wind-chapped nose outstretched, with  
might and main  
Eternally fatigued, he trots his life away.

On his lean neck, that bowed by toil is without stay,  
The lank stiff meshes beat of his dishevelled mane ;  
His skin's worn thin and sore beneath the harness'  
strain ;  
His clinking bit for him the passing bell doth play.

Opening his great round eyes, as mild as his intent,  
He shambles, pondering still, within his head down-  
bent,  
Forgiveness of ill-use, oblivion of constraint.

And by this hero pass the people of the time,  
Undeigning to remark the animal sublime,  
Of whom, were he a man, we should have made a  
saint.

*Translated by* JOHN PAYNE.



# Mary Robinson (Mary Duclaux)

1857.

## THE DEER AND THE PROPHET

A HUNTSMAN, enemy of those  
Who praise the Prophet Mahomet,  
Far in the forest laid his net,  
And laid it deep in tangled briar rose  
And tufts of daffodil and thyme and violet.

One early morning, pink and grey  
As early mornings are in May,  
A fallow deer went forth to take the air ;  
And wandering down the fairest glades that way  
She fell into the snare.

Alas, poor soul, 'twas all in vain  
She sought to venture back again,  
Or bounded far with hurrying feet,  
Or plucked with horn and hoof the net ;  
Too well the mazy toils were set  
Around her russet ankles neat.

All hope being gone, she bowed her innocent head  
And wept. " O Heaven, that is most unjust," she  
said,

" In thy mysterious ends I acquiesce ;  
Yet of thy mercy deign to bless  
The little ones I left at home :  
Twin fawns, still dreaming on their bracken-bed

When I went far to roam,  
And wandered careless where the net was spread.  
And yet, O Heaven, how shall they live,  
Poor yeanlings, if their mother die ?  
Their only nourishment am I ;  
They have no other food beside the milk I give,  
And save my breast no warmth at night,  
While the frost lies crisp and white,  
As lie it will until the roses blow.”  
And here she fetched so deep a sigh  
That her petition could no further go.

Now as she hushed, the huntsman strode in sight,  
Who every morning went that way  
To see if Heaven had led the hoped-for prey  
Into his nets by night.  
And when he saw the fallow deer,  
He stood and laughed aloud and clear,  
And laid his hand upon her neck  
Of russet with a snowy fleck;  
And forth his hunting-knife he drew :  
“ Aha ! ” he cried, “ my pretty dame,  
Into my nets full easily you came ;  
But forth again, my maiden, spring not you.”  
And as he laughed, he would have slit  
The throat that saw no help from it.  
But lo ! a trembling took the air,  
A rustling of the leaves about the snare ;  
And Some-one dusk and slim,  
There, sudden, stayed his hand, and smiled at him.  
Now, never was there huntsman yet  
Who, when the tangled snare was set  
And in the snare the comely game,  
Endured the loosening of the net.

Our huntsman turned an angry face aflame,  
And none the lesser was he wroth  
To see no other, by my troth,  
Than Mahomet himself, the immortal Mahomet,  
Who stood beside the net.

“Ha! old Impostor!” he began  
But “Peace!” the Prophet said, “my man;  
For while we argue, you and I,  
The hungry fawns are like to die.  
Nay, let the mother go. Within an hour, I say,  
She shall return for thee to spare or slay;  
Or if she be not here,  
Then I will stand your slave in surety for the deer.”  
The huntsman turned and stared a while.  
“For sure the fool is void of guile!  
Well, he shall be my slave i’ sooth,  
And work as in his idle youth  
He never worked, the rogue!” Our Huntsman  
laughed for glee.  
And bent and loosed the tangles joyfully:  
And forth the creature bounded, wild and free.  
But when she reached the bracken-bed,  
Where still the young ones lay abed  
Below the hawthorn branches thick—  
“Awake!” she cried, “my fawns, and milk me  
quick;  
For I have left within the net  
The very Prophet Mahomet!”

“Ah,” cried the little fawns, and heard  
(But understood not half a word).  
“Quick, quick, our little mother, quick away,  
And come back all the quicker!” cried the fawns,

And called a last good-bye ;  
And sat a little sad, they knew not why,  
And watched their mother bounding white and grey,  
Dim in the distance o'er the dewy lawns  
And wide, unfriendly forests all in flower.  
And so the deer returned within an hour.

“ Now,” said the Prophet, smiling, “ kill,  
Or take the ransom, as you will.” :  
But on his knees the huntsman fell,  
And cried aloud : “ A miracle !  
Nay, by my nets and hunting-knife,  
I will not take the creature's life,  
And for a slave until I die,  
Thou hast no trustier slave than I ! ”  
No creature is so hard beset,  
But lo ! the undreamed-of Angel yet  
May interpose his power, and change the end.  
And no one is so poor a friend,  
Or so diminished to the dust,  
But may be worthy of a heavenly trust.

# Sir James Rennell Rodd

b. 1858.

## THE SKYLARKS

OH the sky, the sky, the open sky  
For the home of a song-bird's h  
• And why, why, and for 'ever wh  
Do they stifle here in the mart ?  
Cages of agony, rows on rows  
Torture that only a wild thing knows :  
Is it nothing to you to see  
That head thrust out through the hopeless wire,  
And the tiny life, and the mad desire  
To be free, to be free, to be free ?  
Oh the sky, the sky, the wide blue sky,  
For the beat of a song-bird's wings !  
And why, why, and for ever why,  
Is the only song it sings.

Great sad eyes with a frightened stare,  
Look through the 'wilderer darkness there,  
The surge, the crowd, and the cry,  
Fluttering wild wings beat and bleed,  
And it will not peck at the golden seed,  
And the water is almost dry :  
Straight and close are the cramping bars  
From the dawn of mist to the chill of stars,  
And yet it must sing or die !

Will its marred harsh voice in the city street  
Make any heart of you glad ?  
It will only beat with its wings, and beat,  
It will only sing you mad.

Better to be like this one dead,  
Ruffled plumage of breast and head,  
Poor little feathers for ever furled,  
Only a song gone out of the world !

Where the grasses wave like an emerald sea,  
And the poppies nod in the corn,  
Where the fields are wide and the wind blows free,  
This joy of the spring was born,  
Whose passionate music loud and loud  
In the hush of the rose of morn,  
Was a voice that fell from the sailing cloud  
Midway to the blue above—  
A thing whose meaning was joy and love,  
Whose life was one exquisite outpouring  
Of a sweet surpassing note,  
And all you have done is to break its wing  
And to blast God's breath in its throat !

If it does not go to your heart to see  
The helpless pity of those bruised wings,  
The tireless effort with which it clings  
To the strain and the will to be free,  
I know not how I shall set in words  
The meaning of God in this,  
For the loveliest thing in this world of his  
Are the ways and the songs of birds.

But the sky, the sky, the wide free sky  
For the home of the song-bird's heart !  
And why, why, and for ever why  
Do they stifle here in the mart ?

# Katharine Tynan Hinkson

## OF ST. FRANCIS AND THE ASS

OUR Father, ere he went  
Out with his brother, Death,  
Smiling and well-content  
As a bridegroom goeth,  
Sweetly forgiveness prayed  
From man or beast whom he  
Had ever injurèd,  
Or burdened needlessly.

“ Verily,” then said he,  
“ I crave before I pass,  
Forgiveness full and free  
Of my little brother, the ass.  
Many a time and oft,  
When winds and ways were hot,  
He hath borne me cool and soft,  
And service grudged me not.

“ And once did it betide  
There was, unseen of me,  
A gall upon his side  
That suffered grievously.  
And once his manger was  
Empty and bare, and brown.  
(Praise God for sweet, dry grass  
That Bethlehem folk shook down !)



“Consider, brethren,” said he,  
“Our little brother; how mild,  
How patient, he will be,  
Though men are fierce and wild.  
His coat is grey and fine,  
His eyes are kind with love;  
This little brother of mine  
Is gentle as the dove.

“Consider how such an one  
Beheld our Saviour born,  
And carried him, full-grown,  
Through Eastern streets one morn.  
For this the Cross is laid  
Upon him for a sign,  
Greatly is honoured  
This little brother of mine.”

And even while he spake,  
Down in his stable stall  
His little ass 'gan shake  
And turned its face to the wall.  
Down fell the heavy tear;  
Its gaze so mournful was,  
Fra Leo, standing near,  
Pitied the little ass.

That night our father dièd, .  
All night the kine did low:  
The ass went heavy-eyed, '  
With patient tears and slow.  
The very birds on wings<sup>4</sup>  
Made mournful cries<sup>8</sup> in the air.  
Amen! All living things  
Our father's brethren were.

# Francis Adams

1862—1893.

## THE HEDGE-SPARROWS

**I**N early spring I watched two sparrows build,  
And then their nest within the thickset hedge  
Construct, two small dear mates within whose life  
And love, foreshadowed and foreshadowing, I  
Had some sweet underpart. And so at last  
The little round blue eggs were laid, and her post  
The mother brooding kept, while far and wide  
He sought the food for both, or, weariness  
Compelling her, he changed and kept his post  
Within the nest, and she flew forth in turn.

One day, a schoolboy, or some other, came  
And caught her, took the eggs, and tore the nest,  
And went his way. Then, as I stood looking  
Through gathering tears and sobs, all swiftly winged,  
Food-bearing, came the lover back, and flew  
Into the thickset hedge. How shall we say  
How the sweet mate lost for ever, the ruined home,  
And the hope of young, with all life's life and light  
Quenched at a moment for ever, were to him?  
For grief like this grows dumb, deeper than words,  
And man and animal are only one!

# Rosamund Marriott Watson

1863-1911.

## ARMISTICE

**F**ROM the broad summit of the furrowed wold  
The oxen, resting, gaze with quiet eyes—  
Through the swart shining hide's obscurities  
Glow, sharply hewn, the gaunt frame's massive  
mould,

Wide spread the horns in branching outlines bold,  
Solemn they stand beneath the brooding skies,  
Impassive, grave, as guardian deities  
Carved on some stone sarcophagus of old.

Proud 'neath the yoke bends every stately head ;  
What tho' the burden drag, the goad-sting gall,  
Rest is earth's recompense for each and all,  
Ours, as for these mute thralls of trailing tread,  
Emblems of labour immemorial,  
The dignity of toil incarnated.

# Rosamund Marriott Watson

## TO MY CAT

**H**ALF loving-kindliness and half disdain,  
Thou comest to my call serenely 'suave,  
With humming speech and gracious gestures  
grave,

In salutation courtly and urbane ;  
Yet must I humble me thy grace to gain,  
For wiles may win thee though no arts enslave,  
And nowhere gladly thou abidest, save  
Where naught disturbs the concord of thy reign.  
Sphinx of my quiet hearth, who deign'st to dwell  
Friend of my toil, companion of mine ease,  
Thine is the lore of Ra and Rameses ;  
That men forget dost thou remember well,  
Beholden still in blinking reveries  
With sombre, sea-green gaze inscrutable.

# Arthur Symons

b. 1865.

## AMENDS TO NATURE

I HAVE loved colours, and not flowers ;  
Their motion, not the swallow's wings ;  
And wasted more than half my hours  
Without the comradeship of things.

How is it, now, that I can see,  
With love and wonder and delight,  
The children of the hedge and tree,  
The little lords of day and night ?

How is it that I see the roads,  
No longer with usurping eyes,  
A twilight meeting-place for toads,  
A mid-day mart for butterflies ?

I feel, in every midge that hums,  
Life, fugitive and infinite,  
And suddenly the world becomes  
A part of me and I of it.

# Arthur Symons

## THE BROTHER OF A WEED

### I

**I** HAVE shut up my soul with vehemence  
Against the world, and opened every sense  
That I may take, but not for love or price,  
The world's best gold and frankincense and spice.  
I have delighted in all visible things  
And built the world of my imaginings  
Out of the splendour of the day and night,  
And I have never wondered that my sight  
Should serve me for my pleasure, or that aught  
Beyond the lonely mirror of my thought  
Lived, and desired me. I have walked as one  
Who dreams himself the master of the sun,  
And that the seasons are as seraphim  
And in the months and stars bow down to him.

### II

And I have been of all men loneliest,  
And my chill soul has withered in my breast  
With pride and no content and loneliness.  
And I have said: To make our sorrow less  
Is there not pity in the heart of flowers,  
Or joy in wings of birds that might be ours?  
Is there a beast that lives and will not move  
Toward our poor love with a more lovely love?

And might not our proud hopeless sorrow pass  
If we became as humble as the grass?  
I will get down from my sick throne where I  
Dreamed that the seasons of the earth and sky,  
The leash of months and stars, were mine to lead,  
And pray to be the brother of a weed.

### III

I am beginning to find out that there  
Are beings to be pitied everywhere.  
Thus when I hear, at night, an orphaned sheep  
Crying as a child cries, how can I sleep?  
Yet the night-birds are happy, or I seem  
To hear them in the hollow of a dream,  
Whispering to each other in the trees,  
And through the window comes a leaping breeze  
That has the sea-salt in it. When I hear  
Crying of oxen that, in deadly fear,  
Rough men, with cruel dogs about them, drive  
Into the torture-house of death alive,  
How can I sit under a tree and read  
A happy idle book, and take no heed?

### IV

Why is not sorrow kinder to all these  
That have short lives and yet so little ease?  
Life is but anxious fear to lambs and hens,  
And even the birds are enemies of men's  
Because they rob a cherry-tree; the mole  
Cannot be left in quiet in his hole  
Though he is softer than a velvet gown;  
The caterpillar is soon trodden down

Under a boot's ignorant heel, though he  
Is woven finer than old tapestry.  
The worm is close and busy and discreet,  
The foe of nō man living : no man's feet  
Spare him, if he but crawl into the sun.  
Who can be happy, while these things are done ?

## V

Why are the roses filled with such a heat,  
And are so gaudy and riotously sweet,  
When any wind may snap them from the stem  
Or any little green worm canker them ?  
Why is the dawn-delivered butterfly  
So arrogant, knowing he has to die  
Before another dawn has waked his brother ?  
Why do the dragon-flies outshoot each other  
With such an ardour, knowing that the noon  
Will put away his shining arrows soon ?  
Why is the seed that, having got to corn  
Must come to bread, so eager to be born ?  
Why is it that the joy of living gives  
Forgetfulness to everything that lives ?



# Laurence Housman

b. 1865.

## PRISONER OF CARISBROOKE

**I**N the well-house by Carisbrooke,  
Beside the wheel and the winding-gear,  
Three hundred feet in the rock you look,  
Down the way the delvers took  
Into the earth for the well-water.

Turning the wheel by its great beams,  
A meek ass travails from year to year ;  
And the rope aches and the windlass screams,  
And over the bucket a cold sweat streams,  
At the drawing in of the well-water.

Wheel and beast were made and born  
To wear and work at the winding-gear,  
Under all lights of eve and morn ;  
And the beast and the wheel's strong beams were  
worn  
By the weighing in of the well-water.

God in His mercy maketh dumb  
Earth's lower sorrows to man's ear ;  
Yet spake the ass, as he turned the drum,  
" Now youth is ago, and age a-come ;  
" And Freedom were better than well-water ! "

Also his brain, that inwardly  
Made meanings of a distant stir,  
Had come, of putting two by three,  
To dream that other things might be  
Beside the wheel, and the well-water,

And ramparts, where the sad skies kissed,  
The tops of the high juniper.  
For which things one day he was missed,  
(How sped, or whither, no man wist)  
From the dredging up of well-water.

One day, two days, and lo, appears  
Some colour of his missing fur :—  
Over the Keep's top two sad ears,  
Wagging, because no more he hears  
The drippings of the well-water ;

But sees, before, an outstretched down  
Lie silent ; and, below, gives ear  
To tinklings from a busy town ;  
And loses how the shadows frown  
About the wheel and the well-water.

Wherefrom most rudely called to earth,  
Forced back to trudge the ways that were,  
Divided from his meek mute mirth,  
Compelled into the wheel's stern girth,  
Again he trod for well-water.

But never as in the old days, when  
No vision touched or eye or ear ;  
For day by day, in his dark pen,  
He gazed, from the reproach of men,  
On Freedom better than well-water.

Yea Freedom ! underneath the yoke,  
He felt the ancient hand of Her  
Who trained his fathers : so, when spoke  
Her voice against his heart, it broke  
From treadings at the well-water.

And clashing up the stony steep  
To that high Pisgah-top, from where  
First he beheld the broad downs sleep,  
He bade his glad worn body leap  
From bondage of the well-water.

It was but one long leap to go,—  
And, dead to all the griefs that were,  
His quiet body down below,  
Where hazels and dropped acorns grow,  
Found Freedom better than well-water.

# John Galsworthy

b. 1867.

## PITIFUL

WHEN God made man to live his hour,  
And hitch his wagon to a star,  
He made a thing without the power  
To see His creatures as they are.  
He made a masterpiece of will,  
Superb above its mortal lot,  
Invincible by any ill—  
Imagination He forgot!

This man of God, too proud to lie,  
A saint who thinks it shame to sin,  
Yet makes of rainbow-butterfly  
A toy through which to stick a pin.  
He bends on Heaven every wish,  
Believes the tale of Kingdom Come,  
And prisons up the golden fish  
In bowl no bigger than a drum.

He who a hero's pathway trod,  
And at injustice burned with rage,  
Goes pinioning the wings of God  
Within a tiny brazen cage.  
And though he withers from remorse  
When he refuses duty's call,  
He cuts the tail off every horse,  
And carves each helpless animal.

No spur to humour doth he want,  
In wit the Earth he overlords,  
Yet drives the hapless elephant  
To clown and tumble on "the boards."  
This man, of every learning chief,  
So wise that he can read the skies,  
Can fail to read the wordless grief  
That haunts a prisoned monkey's eyes.

He preaches "Mercy to the weak,"  
And strives to lengthen human breath,  
But starves the little gaping beak,  
'And hunts the timid hare to death.  
He, with a spirit wild as wind,  
The world at liberty would see;  
Yet cannot any reason find  
To set the tameless tiger free.

Such healing victories he wins,  
He drugs away the mother's pangs,  
But sets his god-forsaken gins  
To mangle rabbits with their fangs.  
Devote, he travels all the roads  
To track and vanquish all the pains,  
And yet—the wagon overloads,  
The watch-dog to his barrel chains.

He soars the heavens in his flight,  
To measure Nature's majesty;  
And takes his children to delight  
In captive eagles' tragedy.  
A man in knowledge absolute,  
Who right, and love, and honour woos,  
Yet keeps the pitiful poor brute  
To mope and languish in his 'Zoos.

You creatures wild, of field and air,  
Keep far from men where'er they go !  
God set no speculation there—  
Alack!—We know not what we do !

# Norman Gale

b, 1868.

## A THRUSH IN SEVEN DIALS

*(A fact of nature is here disregarded)*

**H**ERE in this den of smoke and filth  
They caged a thrush's broken heart;  
Yet when the sun, as if by stealth,  
Shone, or a milkman's rattling cart  
Shook all her narrow wickerwork,  
The bird would chirp, and very soon  
To passing Jew, or Dane, or Turk  
Sing some remembered forest-tune.

But, ah, the rounded notes that rang  
In emulation of her mate  
Who in the shadowed evening sang  
Beside the five-barred spinney-gate  
Were thin and false! but still the song  
Gained pathos from its lessened spell,  
For this proclaimed aloud the wrong.  
Of shutting thrushes up in hell!

But sometimes, stirred to quite forget  
The crime of her captivity,  
The songster o'er the city's frêe  
Flung strains of bird-divinity,  
And tried to stretch her tattered wings,  
And poise above the constant perch,  
And answered the imaginings  
Of sparrows on the murky church.

She marvelled much that they so small,  
So scant of music, plainly drest,  
Should swoop at will from wall to wall,  
While she, whose melody and breast  
Had fluttered whitethroats in the wood,  
Should hang upon a rusty nail  
And chirp to great-eyed boys who stood  
To hear her sing in rain or hail !

'Twas when these urchins flocked around  
That, most forgetful of her cage,  
Her wild-wood carollings she found  
Warm in her heart, untouched by age :  
So, sitting on her perch, she sang  
Marsh-marigolds and river-sand  
Till all the grimy district rang  
With tales of moss and meadowland.

And then for days she would not shake  
A single utterance from her store,  
Despite the outcast imps who spake  
Like *Oliver*, and asked for more !  
In fluffy listlessness she sat  
And dreamed of all the grassy west—  
How she had feared the parson's cat,  
And how she built the earliest nest !

Sometimes a French piano hurled  
Metallic scales adown the street,  
That seemed to buffet all the world,  
So hard and clear, so shrill and fleet !  
No maddened music of this kind  
Could tempt the thrush to rivalry ;  
She pecked an inch of apple-rind  
And waited till the din went by !



There from a tiny patch of sun  
She made an April for her heart !  
Imagined twigs, and sat thereon,  
Though shaken by the milkman's cart.  
The slinking fog that filled her cage  
Usurped her heritage of dew,  
Of grass, of berries—all the wage  
Of hedgerows where she hid or flew.

And if perchance disdain or pride  
Made e'en her scanty chantings fail,  
*Sing, bird !* an ugly villain cried,  
And swung her fiercely on her nail !  
This was the man whose crafty net  
Cast o'er the lilac meshed her wings—  
'Twas not for such her music set  
The song of her imaginings !

Ah, leave them in the wilderness,  
Or in the bush, or in the brake ;  
Let them in liberty possess  
The haunts God fashioned for their sake !  
And all the glories of their throats  
Shall sound more glorious when they rise  
In flights and waves of noble notes  
To stir your hearts and dim your eyes.

# Francis Jammes

b. 1868.

## PRAYER TO GO TO PARADISE WITH THE ASSES

**O** GOD, when You send for me, let it be  
Upon some festal day of dusty roads.  
I wish as I did ever here-below  
By any road that pleases me, to go  
To Paradise, where stars shine all day long.  
Taking my stick out on the great highway,  
To my dear friends the asses I shall say :  
I am Francis Jammes going to Paradise,  
For there is no hell where the Lord God dwells.  
Come with me, my sweet friends of azure skies  
You poor, dear beasts who whisk off with your ears  
Mosquitoes, peevish blows, and buzzing bees. . . .

Let me appear before You with these beasts,  
Whom I so love because they bow their head  
Sweetly, and halting join their little feet  
So gently that it makes you pity them.  
Let me come followed by their million ears,  
By those that carried paniers on their flanks,  
And those that dragged the cars of acrobats,  
Those that had battered cans upon their backs,  
She-asses limping, full as leather-bottles,  
And these too that they breech because of blue  
And oozing wounds round which the stubborn flies  
Gather in swarms. God, let me come to You  
With all these asses into Paradise.

Let angels lead us where your rivers soothe  
Their tufted banks, and cherries tremble, smooth  
As is the laughing flesh of tender maids. ·  
And let me, where Your perfect peace pervades,  
Be like Your asses, bending down above  
The heavenly waters through eternity,  
To mirror their sweet, humble poverty  
In the clear waters of eternal love.

*Translated by JETHRO BITHELL.*

# Francis Jammes

## MY DOG

**N**OW you are dead, my faithful dog, my  
humble friend,  
Dead of the death that like a wasp you fled,  
When under the table you would hide. Your head  
Was turned to me in the brief and bitter end.

O mate of man ! Blest being ! You that shared  
Your master's hunger and his meals as well ! . . .  
You that in days of old in pilgrimage fared  
With young Tobias and the angel Rafael. . . .

Servant that loved me with a love intense,  
As saints love God, my great exemplar be ! . . .  
The mystery of your deep intelligence  
Dwells in a guiltless, glad eternity.

Dear Lord ! If You should grant me by Your grace  
To see You face to face in Heaven, O then  
Grant that a poor dog look into the face  
Of him who was his god here among men ! . . .

*Translated by JETHRO BITHELL.*

# Walter de la Mare

b. 1873.

## NICHOLAS NYE

**T**HISTLE and darnel and dock grew there,  
And a bush, in the corner, of may,  
On the orchard wall I used to sprawl  
In the blazing heat of the day ;  
Half asleep and half awake,  
While the birds went twittering by,  
And nobody there my love to share  
But Nicholas Nye.

Nicholas Nye was lean and grey,  
Lame of a leg and old,  
More than a score of donkey's years  
He had seen since he was foaled ;  
He munched the thistles, purple and spiked,  
Would sometimes stoop and sigh,  
And turn his head, as if he said,  
" Poor Nicholas Nye ! "

Alone with his shadow he'd drowse in the meadow,  
Lazily swinging his tail,  
At break of day he used to bray,  
Not much too hearty and hale ;  
But a wonderful gumption was under his skin,  
And a clear calm light in his eye,  
And once in a while : he'd smile :—  
Would Nicholas Nye.

Seem to be smiling at me he would,  
From his bush in the corner, of may,—  
Bony and ownerless, widowed and worn,  
Knobble-kneed, lonely and grey ;  
And over the grass would seem to pass  
'Neath the deep dark blue of the sky,  
Something much better than words between' me  
And Nicholas Nye.

But dusk would come in the apple boughs,  
The green of the glow-worm shine,  
The birds in nest, would crouch to rest,  
And home I'd trudge to mine ;  
And there in the moonlight, dark with dew,  
Asking not wherefore nor why,  
Would brood like a ghost, and as still as a post,  
Old Nicholas Nye.

# Walter de la Mare

## ALL BUT BLIND

**A**LL but blind  
In his chambered hole  
Gropes for worms  
The four-clawed Mole.

All but blind  
In the evening sky  
The hooded Bat  
Twirls softly by.

All but blind  
In the burning day  
The Barn-Owl blunders  
On her way.

And blind as are  
These three to me,  
So, blind to Some-one  
I must be.

# Walter de la Mare

## THE LINNET

UPON this leafy bush  
With thorns and roses in it,  
Flutters a thing of light,  
A twittering linnnet.  
And all the throbbing world  
Of dew and sun and air  
By this small parcel of life  
Is made more fair ;  
As if each bramble spray  
And mounded gold-wreathed furze;  
Harebell and little thyme,  
Were only hers ;  
As if this beauty and grace  
Did to one bird belong,  
And, at a flutter of wing,  
Might vanish in song.



# Alfred Noyes

b. 1880.

## THE SKYLARK CAGED

### I

**B**EAT, little breast, against the wires,  
    ,Strive little wings and misted eyes,  
    Which one wild gleam of memory fires  
    Beseeching still the unfettered skies,  
Whither at dewy dawn you sprang  
Quivering with joy from this dark earth and sang.

### II

And still you sing—your narrow cage  
    Shall set at least your music free!  
Its rapturous wings in glorious rage  
    Mount and are lost in liberty,  
While those who caged you creep on earth  
Blind prisoners from the hour that gave them birth.

### III

Sing! The great City surges round.  
    Blinded with light, thou canst not know.  
Dream! 'Tis the fir-wood's windy sound  
    Rolling a psalm of praise below.  
Sing, o'er the bitter dust and shame,  
And touch us with thine own transcendent flame.

#### IV

Sing, o'er the City dust and shine ;  
Sing, o'er the squalor and the gold,  
The greed that darkens earth with crime,  
The spirits that are bought and sold.  
O, shower the healing notes like rain,  
And lift us to the height of grief again.

#### V

Sing ! the same music swells your breast  
And the wild notes are still as sweet  
As when above the fragrant nest  
And the wide billowing fields of wheat  
You soared and sang the livelong day,  
And in the light of heaven dissolved away.

#### VI

The light of heaven ! Is it not here ?  
One rapture, one ecstatic joy,  
One passion, one sublime despair,  
One grief which nothing can destroy,  
You—though your dying eyes are wet—  
Remember, 'tis our blunted hearts forget.

#### VII

Beat, little breast, still beat, still beat,  
Strive, misted eyes and tremulous wings ;  
Swell, little throat, your *Sweet ! Sweet ! Sweet !*  
Thro' which such deathless memory rings :  
Better to break your heart and die,  
Than, like your gaolers, to forget your sky.

# James Stephens

## THE SNARE

**I** HEAR a sudden cry of pain !  
There is a rabbit in a snare :  
Now I hear the cry again,  
But I cannot tell from where.

But I cannot tell from where  
He is calling out for aid ;  
Crying on the frightened air,  
Making everything afraid.

Making everything afraid,  
Wrinkling up his little face,  
As he cries again for aid ;  
And I cannot find the place.

And I cannot find the place  
Where his paw is in the snare :  
Little one ! Oh, little one !  
I am searching everywhere.

# Stella Benson

## THE DOG TUPMAN

**O**H little friend of half my days,  
My little friend who followed me  
Along these crooked sullen ways  
That only you had eyes to see.

You felt the same. You understood.  
You too, defensive and morose,  
Enfolded your secret puppyhood—  
Your secret heart—and held them close.

For I alone have seen you serve,  
Disciple of those early springs,  
With ears awry and tail a-curve  
You lost yourself in puppy things.

And you saw me. You bore in mind  
The clean and sunny things I felt  
When, throwing hate along the wind  
I flashed the lantern at my belt.

The moment passed and we returned  
To barren words and old cold truth,  
Yet in our hearts our lanterns burned,  
We two had seen each other's youth.

When filthy pain did wrap me round  
Your upright ears I always saw,  
And on my outflung hand I found  
The blessing of your horny paw ;

And yet—oh impotence of men—  
My paw, more soft but not more wise,  
Old friend, was lacking to you when  
You looked your crisis in the eyes. . . .

You shared my youth, oh faithful friend,  
,You let me share your puppyhood ;  
So, if I failed you at the end,  
My friend, my friend, you understood.

# V. H. Friedlaender

## TO A BLUE TIT

**D**AY after day you who are free as air  
(And how much freer, then, than I!)  
Venture your birthright, dare  
That heavenly liberty, to fly  
And feed upon my hand: I marvel why.

No other bird of your bright company  
Commits a folly so divine!  
Their chatter bids you be  
Wary of guile—of some design  
That you alone are conscious is not mine. .

And even I, with less to lose than you,  
I, wingless prisoner of the dust,  
Would shun risks you renew  
Each morning, not because you must,  
But in a sweet wild miracle of trust.

Bird, as you call me to the window-ledge  
With flashes and blue flutterings,  
It seems the grey world's edge;  
And, with the thrill your light touch brings,  
I am your kin and know the lift of wings!

# Ralph Hodgson

## LINES

**N**O pitted toad behind a stone  
But hoards some secret grace ;  
The meanest slug with midnight gone  
Has left a silver trace.

No dullest eyes to beauty blind,  
Uplifted to the beast,  
But prove some kin with angel kind,  
Though lowliest and least.

# Ralph Hodgson

## THE BELLS OF HEAVEN

'**T**WOULD ring the bells of Heaven,  
The wildest peal for years,  
If Parson lost his senses  
And people came to theirs,  
And he and they together  
Knelt down with angry prayers  
For tamed and shabby tigers,  
And dancing dogs and bears,  
And wretched, blind pit ponies,  
And little hunted hares.



# Ralph Hodgson

## STUPIDITY STREET.

**I** SAW with open eyes  
Singing birds sweet  
Sold in the shops  
For the people to eat,  
Sold in the shops of  
Stupidity Street.

I saw in a vision  
The worm in the wheat,  
And in the shops nothing  
For people to eat;  
Nothing for sale in  
Stupidity Street.

# George T. Marsh

## IN THE "ZOO"

**E**XILES, they tread their narrow bounds  
Behind the iron bars.  
Where'er they turn the hand of man  
Their straining vision mars,  
Save only when at night they gaze  
Upon the friendly stars.

See ! there a golden eagle broods  
With glazed, unsealing eyes  
That never more will sweep the snows  
Where blue Sierras rise ;  
And there, sick for his native hills,  
A sullen panther lies.

What dreams of silent polar nights  
Disturb the white bear's sleep ?  
Roams he once more unfettered where  
Eternal ice-floes sweep ?  
What memories of the jungle's ways  
Does that gaunt tiger keep ?

Such wistful eyes the hartbeest turn  
Beyond their cramped domain.  
They seem to see the yellowing leagues  
Of wind-swept veldt again.  
And look ! a springbok lifts his head  
As though he smelled the plain.

Exiles, they tread their narrow bounds  
    Behind the iron bars,  
For thus the ruthless hand of man ·  
    Each God-made creature mars.  
But oh, what hungry eyes they raise  
    Up to the friendly stars !

# Geoffrey Dearmer

## THE TURKISH TRENCH DOG

NIGHT held me as I crawled and scrambled  
near  
The Turkish lines. Above, the mocking stars  
Silvered the curving parapet, and clear  
Cloud-latticed beams o'erflecked the land with bars ;  
I, crouching, lay between  
Tense-listening armies peering through the night,  
Twin giants bound by tentacles unseen.  
Here in dim-shadowed light  
I saw him, as a sudden movement turned  
His eyes towards me, glowing eyes that burned  
A moment ere his snuffling muzzle found  
My trail ; and then as serpents mesmerize  
He chained me with those unrelenting eyes,  
That muscle-sliding rhythm, knit and bound  
In spare-limbed symmetry, those perfect jaws  
And soft-approaching pitter-patter paws.  
Nearer and nearer like a wolf he crept—  
That moment had my swift revolver leapt—  
But terror seized me, terror born of shame  
Brought flooding revelation. For he came  
As one who offers comradeship deserved,  
An open ally of the human race,  
And sniffing at my prostrate form unnerved  
He licked my face !

# Francis Brett Young

## BÊTE HUMAINE

**R**IDING through Ruwu swamp, about sunrise,  
I saw the world awake ; and as the ray  
Touched the tall grasses where they dream  
till day,

Lo, the bright air alive with dragonflies,  
With brittle wings aquiver, and great eyes  
Piloting crimson bodies, slender and gay.  
I aimed at one, and struck it, and it lay  
Broken and lifeless, with fast-fading dyes.  
Then my soul sickened with a sudden pain  
And horror, at my own careless cruelty,  
That where all things are cruel I had slain  
A creature whose sweet life it is to fly :  
Like beasts that prey with bloody claw : Nay, they  
Must slay to live, but what excuse had I ?

## NOTES



## NOTES

### Page 1

#### THE NYMPH COMPLAINING FOR THE DEATH OF HER FAWN

Cp. the description of Silvia's stag in Virgil's *Æneid* (Book 7). It is possible that Marvell had the passage in mind when writing this exquisite poem.

### Page 5

#### • ON AN EAGLE

Smart was the author of *A Song to David*, one of the most beautiful lyrics of the eighteenth century before Blake, frequently quoted in modern anthologies, and reprinted in 1898 (edited by J. R. Tutin). A collected edition of his works (excluding *A Song to David*) was published in 1791.

### Page 7

#### EPITAPH ON A HARE

Cowper's delightful prose description of his three tame hares first printed in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for June 1784, was reprinted in the 1800 edition of his poems, and also in the excellent Oxford edition (1905). "It is no wonder," he wrote, "that my intimate acquaintance with these specimens of the kind has taught me to hold the Sportman's amusement in abhorrence; he little knows what amiable creatures he persecutes, of what gratitude they are capable, how cheerful they are in their spirits, what enjoyment they have of life, and that, impressed as they seem with a peculiar dread of man, it is only because man gives them peculiar cause for it." In the following charming passage from *The Task* he again refers to one of his pets:

"Detested sport,  
That owes its pleasures to another's pain,  
That feeds upon the sobs and dying shrieks



Of harmless nature, dumb but yet endued  
 With eloquence that agonies inspire  
 Of silent tears and heart-distending sighs.  
 Vain tears, alas! and sighs that never find  
 A corresponding tone in jovial souls.  
 Well—one at least is safe. One sheltered hare  
 Has never heard the sanguinary yell  
 Of cruel man, exulting in her woes.  
 Innocent partner of my peaceful home,  
 Whom ten long years' experience of my care  
 Has made at least familiar, she has lost  
 Much of her vigilant instinctive dread,  
 Not needful here, beneath a roof like mine.  
 Yes—thou may'st eat thy bread and lick the hand  
 That feeds thee; thou may'st frolic on the floor  
 Secure at evening, and at night retire secure  
 To thy straw couch, and slumber unalarm'd;  
 For I have gained thy confidence, have pledged  
 All that is human in me to protect  
 Thine unsuspecting gratitude and love.  
 If I survive thee I will dig thy grave  
 And when I place thee in it, sighing, say,  
 I knew at least one hare that had a friend."

Cp. Thomson's *Autumn* (1730), lines 401 ff.:

"Poor is the triumph o'er the timid hare," etc.

Thomson, who devoutly hated hunting, was Cowper's chief forerunner in voicing his feelings about it in his poetry.

Cowper's *The Task*, published in 1785, contains many striking humanitarian passages, where the poet writes in a more impassioned strain than is usual with him. Such are e.g. the arraignment of man for his cruelty to animals (in Book VI) and the oft-quoted lines:

"I would not enter on my list of friends  
 (Though graced with polish'd manners and fine sense,  
 Yet wanting sensibility) the man  
 Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm."

## Page 10

### AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE

Text from the Oxford edition of Blake's poems, edited by John Sampson (London: H. Milford, 1913).

In the case of this piece, which was never published by Blake, and cannot, as usually printed, be regarded as a connected whole, I have felt at liberty to break the rule of not including extracts, referred to in the preface to this volume.

"The title *Auguries of Innocence* probably," as Mr. Yeats conjectures, "refers only to the opening quatrain, although the manuscript itself has no space or line separating it from the couplets which follow. These proverbs . . . were doubtless transcribed from scattered jottings elsewhere."

Mr. Sampson, in his edition, appends an interesting attempt to rearrange the proverbs in an order which will enable the poem to be read as a whole instead of as a series of more or less disconnected distiches.

## Page 12

### NIGHT

"Nothing like this was ever written in the text of the lion and the lamb; no such heaven of sinless animal life was ever conceived so intensely and sweetly," wrote Swinburne of this poem, in his *William Blake* (1868).

Cp., however, the beautiful passage on Shelley's *The Witch of Atlas* (stanzas 6 and 7):

"And first the spotted cameleopard came,  
And then the wise and fearless elephant;  
Then the shy serpent in the golden flame  
Of his own volumes intervolved;—all gaunt  
And sanguine beasts her gentle looks made tame.  
They drank before her at her sacred fount;  
And every beast of beating heart grew bold  
Such gentleness and power even to behold.  
The brindled lioness led forth her young  
That she might teach them how they should forgo  
Their inborn thirst of death; the pard unstrung  
His sinews at her feet and sought to know  
With looks whose motions spoke without a tongue  
How he might be as gentle as the doe.  
The magic circle of her looks and eyes  
All savage natures did imparadise. . . ."

And the long passage in the *Kilmory* of James Hogg (1770–1835) beginning:

"But whenever her peaceful form appear'd,  
The wild beasts of the hill were cheer'd."

THE ALPINE HUNTER

Schiller derived the hint for this poem from the following passage, relating a Swiss legend, in Bonstetten's *Briefe ueber ein Schweizerisches Hirtenland*, which he read in 1803.

"An aged couple had a disobedient son, who would not herd their cattle, but went chamois-hunting. Lost amid the glaciers and snow-fields one day, he gave himself up for dead. Thereupon the Mountain Spirit approached him saying, "The chamois you are hunting are my flock; why do you persecute them?" But he showed him the way, and the lad returned home and pastured his cattle."

*Der Alpenjaeger*, written in 1804, is one of the most popular of Schiller's ballads; and in spite of the fact that no satisfactory English version exists, though it has been frequently translated (among others by Bulwer Lytton), I have included it on account of its historical interest. The anonymous translation here printed was selected, wooden though it is, as being somewhat nearer to the original than the rest. The literal rendering of the final couplet, which has become a proverbial quotation in Germany, is:

"Room for all the Earth affords,  
Why pursuest thou my flock?"

ON SEEING A WOUNDED HARE

See Burns's letter to Alex. Cunningham, May 4, 1789.

"One morning lately as I was out pretty early in the fields, sowing some grass seeds, I heard the burst of a shot from a neighbouring plantation, and presently a poor little wounded hare came crippling by me. You will guess my indignation at the inhuman fellow who could shoot a hare at this season, when all of them have young ones. Indeed there is something in that business of destroying for our sport, individuals in the animal kingdom that do not injure us materially, which I could never reconcile to my ideas of virtue."

Burns's detestation of sport was constantly expressed. See e.g. the lines in *Peggy* ("Now westlin winds and slaught'ring guns"):

“Avaunt, away ! the cruel sway,  
 Tyrannic man’s dōminion ;  
 The sportsman’s joy, the murd’ring cry,  
 The flutt’ring gory pinion !”

And, in *The Brigs of Ayr* :

“The thundering guns are heard on every side,  
 The wounded coveys, reeling, scatter wide,  
 The feathered field-mates, bound by Nature’s tie,  
 Sires, mothers, children, in one carnage lie :  
 (What warm poetic heart, but inly bleeds  
 And execrates man’s savage, ruthless deeds !)”

Even when lamenting the death of a sportsman, loved by him for his good qualities, the humane poet cannot refrain from ironically imagining that

“On his mouldering breast  
 Some spiteful moorfowl bigs her nest.”

## Page 17

### TO A MOUSE

“John Blane, farm-servant at Mossgiel, stated to me that he recollected the incident perfectly. Burns was holding the plough with Blane for his driver, when the little creature was observed running off across the field. Blane . . . was thoughtlessly running after it to kill it, when Burns checked him, but not angrily, asking what ill the poor mouse had ever done him, and during the remainder of the afternoon he spoke not. In the night he awoke Blane, who slept with him, and reading the poem, which had in the meantime been composed, asked what he thought of the mouse now.” Robert Chambers. (*Life of Burns*, 1851.)

## Page 19

### ON SCARING SOME WATERFOWL

Cp. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt’s *Sed nos qui vivimus* (stanza 76) :

“ . . . Our noise in loosing her has roused a heron,  
 And with him teals and lapwings, with a cry of swift alarm.  
 Ah Man ! thy hated face disturbs once more thy natural fellows,  
 What is thy kingship worth to thee if all things fly thy hand ? ”

See also Burns's *Letters* :

"I never hear the loud solitary whistle of the curlew in a summer noon, or the wild cadence of a troop of grey plovers in an autumnal morning without feeling an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion or poetry."

Page 28

A WREN'S NEST

Written in 1833. "This nest was built, as described, in a tree that grows near the pool in Dora's field next the Rydal Mount garden." (Note by Wordsworth.)

Page 31

HART-LEAP WELL

"Written at Grasmere. Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askrigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable Chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second part of the poem, which monuments do now exist as I have here described them. . . . My sister and I had passed the place on our winter journey from Stockburn on the banks of the Tees to Grasmere. A peasant whom we met near the spot told us the story so far as concerned the name of the Well, and the Hart, and pointed out the Stones."

(Note by Wordsworth.)

This was in 1800. The concluding stanzas contain some of Wordsworth's noblest humanitarian lines. And in spite of the harsh Anglicanism and conservatism of his later years—so fiercely pilloried by Shelley in a note to *Peter Bell the Third*—in spite of his reference to "the blameless sport" of angling (Sonnet *Written in the Complete Angler*), and of the *Sonnets on the Punishment of Death*, Wordsworth never wholly lost that early faith so ardently expressed in such passages as the following :

"I was only then  
Contented when with bliss ineffable  
I felt the sentiment of Being spread  
O'er all that moves, and all that seemeth still ;

O'er all that leaps and runs and shouts and sings,  
Or beats the gladsome air; o'er all that glides  
Beneath the wave. . . ."

(*The Prelude*, Book II.)

"He who feels contempt  
For any living thing, hath faculties  
Which he has never used; . . . thought with him  
Is in its infancy."

(*Lines left upon a seat in a Yew Tree*, 1795.)

"'Tis Nature's law  
That none, the meanest of created things  
Or forms created the most vile and brute,  
The dullest or most noxious, should exist  
Divorced from good—a spirit and pulse of good,  
A life and soul, to every mode of being  
Inseparably linked." •

(*The Old Cumberland Beggar*, 1798.)

"Birds and beasts  
And the mute fish that glances in the stream  
And harmless reptile coiling in the sun,  
And gorgeous insect hovering in the air,  
The fowl domestic and the household dog—  
In his capacious mind he loved them all:  
*Their rights acknowledging he felt for all.*" •

(*The Excursion*, Book II, dating from 1795 to 1804.)

The two strongly humanitarian poems, *Humanity* and *Liberty*, were written as late as 1829, the latter containing the characteristic lines:

"Who can divine what impulses from God  
Reached the caged lark, within a town-abode,  
From his poor inch or two of daisied sod?  
O yield him back his privilege! No sea  
Swell like the bosom of a man set free;  
A wilderness is rich with liberty."

The *Eagles* sonnet was written in 1831, and *A Wren's Nest* in 1833, in the poet's sixty-third year.

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### FIDELITY

Written in 1805. Wordsworth himself stated that he had purposely made his narrative as prosaic as possible, in order that no discredit might be cast on the truth of the incident.

(See H. Crabb Robinson's *Diary*, September 10, 1816.) The "traveller" actually disappeared early in April 1805, and his body, guarded by his faithful terrier, was not discovered till July 20th following. Scott's well-known *Helvellyn* deals with the same incident :

"How oft did'st thou think that his silence was slumber ?

When the wind waved his garment, how oft did'st thou start ?

How many long days and long weeks did'st thou number,  
Ere he faded before thee, the friend of thy heart ? "

But Scott's rhetorical stanzas, where the main theme is the death of "the Pilgrim of Nature" (who, by the way, appears to have gone to Nature for the purpose of *angling* !) cannot compare in intensity of feeling with Wordsworth's exquisitely simple poem, which is concerned only with the devotion of the dog.

#### Page 41

#### TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF A DOG

First printed in 1807. "Changes in the text were made in later editions, chiefly with a view to toning down any seeming extravagance in the feeling towards the dog, and in the ascription to her of almost human passions. Thus two opening lines of 1807 were omitted in the 1827 edition :

"Lie here sequester'd : be this little mound  
For ever thine, and be it holy ground."

Line 11 originally stood :

"I pray'd for thee, and that thine end were past"—  
and lines 27 and 28 :

"For love, that comes to all ; the holy sense,  
Best gift of God, in thee was most intense."

(E. Dowden.)

The dog here celebrated was the "little Musie"—"a loving creature she and brave"—who was the subject of Wordsworth's poem *Incident characteristic of a favourite dog*, which precedes the *Tribute* in collected editions of his poems.

#### Page 44

#### THE WILD DUCK'S NEST

Probably written in 1819. "I observed this beautiful nest on the largest island of Rydal Water." (Note by Wordsworth.)

SUGGESTED BY A DRAWING OF THE BIRD OF PARADISE

First published in 1845. Ten years earlier Wordsworth had written another poem on the same subject : *On seeing a coloured drawing of the Bird of Paradise*. This, though it contains some fine lines, is much less interesting than the piece here printed.

TO A YOUNG ASS

Written and published in 1794. Lamb thought the piece too trivial a companion for *Religious Musings*, and tried in vain to dissuade Coleridge from reprinting it; while Coleridge's best editor, Campbell, remarks that "the poem is chiefly interesting for its references to Pantisocracy (ll. 27-31) by which Coleridge was severely bitten at the time." One would think, on the contrary, that it is chiefly interesting because its sentiments are so similar to those expressed in the famous lines of *The Ancient Mariner*, written only four years later :

"Beyond the shadow of the ship,  
I watched the water-snakes :

O happy living things ! no tongue  
Their beauty might declare :  
A spring of love gushed from my heart,  
And I blessed them, unaware : "

and :

"He prayeth well, who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast.  
He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small ;  
For the dear God who loveth us  
He made and loveth all."

ON THE DEATH OF A SPANIEL

The idea contained in the concluding lines, that if man is destined to immortality, his sub-human friends ought to share it with him, has been frequently expressed in poetry, from the ancient Sanscrit Mahabharata to the present day.



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TO THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET

For an essay by H. S. Salt on Leigh Hunt as a humanitarian (with many quotations from his writings) see *The Humanitarian*, July 1914. Hunt's poem *Captain Sword and Captain Pen* contains the oft-quoted lines on the horse wounded in battle :

"O Friend of Man ! O noble creature,  
 Patient and brave and mild by nature,  
 Mild by nature, and mute as mild,  
 Why brings he to these passes wild  
 Thee, gentle Horse, thou shape of beauty ?  
 Could he not do his dreadful duty  
 (If duty it be, which seems mad folly),  
 Nor link thee to his melancholy."

TO A SKYLARK

As this collection excludes "extracts" it is unfortunately only possible to represent thus inadequately, by a single well-known poem, the most thorough and consistent of all our great humanitarian poets, who must certainly have had himself in mind when he wrote of one who was

"as a nerve o'er which do creep  
 The else unfelt oppressions of this earth."

"If we seek for a terse and comprehensive title for his poetical contribution to the literature and thought of his age," writes H. S. Salt, in his *Shelley, Poet and Pioneer*, "we shall call it the Poetry of Love." And this quality is just as intense, and just as clearly perceptible in his numerous references to the sub-human as in those to the human. As H. S. Salt says in his admirable study *Shelley as a Pioneer of Humanitarianism* (London, 1902) : "Whenever he speaks of animals, it is with an instinctive, childlike, and perfectly natural sense of kinship and brotherhood. Thus in *Alastor*, in the invocation of Nature, we find him saying :

"If no bright bird, insect, or gentle beast  
 I consciously have injured, but still loved  
 And cherished these my kindred."

And the same tone runs through the famous lines in *Queen Mab* :

"No longer now  
 He slays the lamb that looks him in the face."

No longer now the wingèd habitants,  
 That in the woods their sweet lives sing away,  
 Flee from the form of man; but gather round,  
 And prune their sunny feathers on the hands  
 Which little children stretch in friendly sport  
 Towards these dreadless partners of their play.  
 All things are void of terror; man has lost  
 His terrible prerogative, and stands  
 ' An equal amidst equals."

And again, in his description of the Lady of the Garden, in  
*The Sensitive Plant* :

"And all killing insects, and gnawing worms,  
 And things of obscene and unlovely forms,  
 She bore, in a basket of Indian woof,  
 Into the rough woods far aloof,

"In a basket of grasses and wild flowers full,  
 The freshest her gentle hands could pull  
 For the poor banished insects, whose intent,  
 Although they did ill, was innocent."

Compare also *The Daemon of the World*, part II (1816), *The  
 Revolt of Islam*, X, 1 and 2 (1817), etc. "

Page 58

#### THE CRICKET

"The Naturalist of the Supplement to the British Almanack  
 tells me that crickets rusticate in summer, and return to their  
 firesides in winter. I would I knew this for a fact."

(Note by Hartley Coleridge.)

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#### THE DEATH OF THE WOLF

'Written at the Chateau of M—— in 1843."

I have not been able to discover a more exact English rendering  
 of Vigny's famous *La Mort du Loup* than this blank-verse para-  
 phrase. The original is, of course, in rhymed Alexandrines.

Line 45. Cp. Byron's *Childe Harold* (IV, 88). Vigny was well  
 acquainted with that poem, and it seems likely that a passage  
 in it (IV, 21) gave him the first suggestion of *La Mort du Loup* :

" Mute,  
 The camel labours with the heaviest load;  
 And the wolf dies in silence—not bestowed,  
 In vain should such examples be; . . ."

Line 87. Cp. Lenau's lines in a beautiful passage in his poem *Die Albigenser* :

"From dying beasts we men perchance might learn  
More than from those dim stars to which we turn," etc.

and Robert Arnaud's fine poem *D'un Lion à crinière courte que nous tuâmes* :

"Et nous avons en peur, nous, les hommes de proie,  
Nous avons craint son regard fier, à cette bête.  
Longuement il se fixe sur nous ; puis la tête  
Retombe sur le sol farouche qu'elle broie."

See also Vigny's magnificent lines on the dying eagle, in *Eloa* (1824) ; and the description of the scorpion tortured by boys, in the preface to his play *Chatterton* (1835).

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THE FOWLER

This interesting and little-known piece by the author of the oft-reprinted Scots novel *Mansie Wauch*, is taken from his *Poems* (London, 1852), which also contains his verses *To a Wounded Ptarmigan*. The *Fowler* was doubtless written under the influence of Wordsworth. Cp. Oliver Wendell Holmes's poem *My Aviary*.

Page 70

THE BEETLE-WORSHIPPER

I am indebted to Mr. W. H. Hudson for calling my attention to these lines by a forgotten author. Ritchie was a Scot, something of a traveller, a novelist, and one of the busiest miscellaneous writers of his day.

Page 72

THE BIRD'S NEST

The original was first printed in Lenau's *Die Albigenser* (1842). See also his letter to Sophie Löwenthal (June 25, 1839) : "When I was a boy I always felt sad if I found an empty bird's nest in the woods, thinking of the flown nestlings and longing to see them."

Cp. Charles Tennyson-Turner's sonnet *On Shooting a Swallow in early Youth*.

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WINGED THINGS

See also the translation by John Payne of Hugo's poem *The Tomtit*, describing the freeing of the last bird in his aviary. (*Flowers of France : the Romantic Period*, 1876) :

“ And I said, opening my hand, ‘ Be free ! ’  
 The bird fled forth among the bushes, fluttering  
 Into the immensity resplendent of the spring ;  
 And I the little soul saw, in the distance wend  
 Toward that rosy light wherewith a flame doth blend,  
 In the deep air among the infinite tree-crests. . . . ”

Page 85

TO A STARVED HARE

Many of Tennyson-Turner's numerous sonnets, besides those here printed, show the same keen sympathy with his non-human fellow-creatures. Such are, for instance, *The Lark's Nest*, *The Plea of the Shot Swallow*, *On Shooting a Swallow*, and *Rose and Cushie*, the last recalling Lucretius's wonderful picture of the cow mourning for her calf (*De Rerum Natura*, II, 352-66).

His brother, Alfred Tennyson, considered that some of the sonnets had all the tenderness of the Greek epigram, and ranked a few of them among the noblest in the language.

Page 86

THE BEAST

Many of the notes in Hebbel's posthumously published Diaries afford ample proof that during the last few years of his life his mind was greatly occupied with the question of man's relations to the other animals. In this period he developed views akin to those propounded by Schopenhauer, and later on called by Wagner the Religion of Compassion; and one of the results was a series of poems suffused with humanitarian sentiment, such as the pathetic verses on his dog called a *Memory of Childhood*, culminating in the magnificent stanzas of *The Brahman*—a glorification of the Jaina principle of the sacredness of life—written, as he himself recorded, during great suffering, shortly before his death.

His Diary contains two short entries which formed the germ of his poem *The Beast* :

“ In the beast, Nature, helpless and naked, seems to confront man, saying, ‘ I have done so much for you ; what are you doing for me ? ’ ” (March 7, 1860.)

“ The beast was man's first teacher : in return for this man ‘ trains ’ the beast. ” (April 1, 1860.)

This recalls the words of another great German poet, Richard Wagner : “ To the beasts, who were our teachers in all the arts by which we have trapped and subjugated them, man was

superior in nothing save deceit and cunning, by no means in courage . . . and we can only attribute our victory over them to our greater power of dissembling."

(*Open Letter to Weber*, Bayreuth, 1879.)

Cp. also Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* :

" . . . even as a leprous child is left,  
Who follows a sick beast to some warm cleft  
Of rocks through which the might of healing springs is pured ;  
Then when it wanders home with rosy smile,  
Unconscious, and its mother fears awhile,  
It is a spirit, then, weeps on her child restored."

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THE SECRET OF BEAUTY

Hebbel, one of the least sentimental of writers, records the death of this squirrel, and his own deep grief, in a long entry in his Diary, scarcely to be read without tears : " To me he was a direct revelation of Nature. I am ready now to believe in the Son of Androcles, in the suckling she-wolf of the Romans, in St. Genevieve's Mind ; I will never again destroy a mouse, or even a worm. I honour my kinship with the dead animal, however distant, and I shall seek henceforth—not only in mankind, but in everything that lives and moves—an unfathomable divine secret, which can be at least approached by love. So greatly has this creature ennobled me, and enlarged my horizon ! . . . If I put him on a tree he would climb up, taste a plum, or watch some astonished bird flying round him, and then glide down into my hands again. If I put him on the ground he would scamper back to the house at great speed, along the sand-strewn path. Who could ever describe all these charming pictures ? In my poem, which this beautiful animal evoked, I have summed them up. But I must end, for my eyes are full of tears. Once more—that you may rest in peace my Herzi, is the prayer of your eternal debtor Friedrich Hebbel " (November 6, 1861).

There is a long and interesting poem by the Austrian poet, Robert Hanerling, on his squirrel (*Mein Eichhörnchen* ; in *Sinnen und Minnen*, 1860), from which the following lines are taken :

" Wer aber beschreibt, ach, was der kleiner Freund  
Meinem Herzen geworden ? Welches sympathische Band  
Von seiner Seele zu meiner zuletzt  
Geheimnissvoll hinüberspann ? . . . "

Cp. also Wordsworth's *Humanity* (1829) :

"And functions dwell in beast and bird that sway  
The reasoning mind, or with the fancy play,  
Inviting at all seasons ears and eyes .  
To watch for undelusive auguries :  
Not uninspired appear their simplest ways."

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#### POOR MATTHIAS

For some interesting and characteristic remarks on this poem by W. H. Hudson, see his *Birds in a Village* (1893, page 136). See also Arnold's *Kaiser dead*, a poem which, in its combination of humour and tenderness, recalls Burns.

Page 108

#### THE CAGED LION

The fullest English translation of the poems of Sándor Petőfi, the "national poet" of Hungary, is still the little volume of selections by Sir John Bowring (London, 1866).

Cp. Oliver Wendell Holmes's *To a Caged Lion* :

"Poor conquered monarch ! though that haughty glance  
Still speaks thy courage unsubdued by time,  
And in the grandeur of thy sullen tread  
Lives the 'proud spirit' of thy burning clime ;—  
Fettered by things that shudder at thy roar,  
Torn from thy pathless wilds to pace this narrow floor !"

Page 111

#### THE TWO BLACKBIRDS

From Meredith's first published volume, *Poems* (1851), which also contains the delightful *Invitation to the Country*.

Cp. W. H. Hudson's essay on "Friendship in Animals" (in *Adventures among Birds*, 1912) for some singular examples of a not uncommon occurrence.

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#### YOUTH IN AGE

First published in 1908, shortly before the poet's death.

THE ADULTERESS

Cp. Edwin Arnold's poem *The Great Journey* (from the *Mahabharata*), wherein occurs the remarkable passage in which the King steadfastly refuses the proffered joys of heaven, unless his dog is permitted to accompany him thither :

“ ‘Monarch,’ spake Indra, ‘thou art now as we,  
 Deathless, divine ; thou art become a god ;  
 Glory and power and gifts celestial,  
 And all the joys of heaven are thine for aye :  
 What hath a beast with these ? Leave herè thy hound !’  
 Yet Yudishthira answered : ‘ O Most High  
 O thousand-eyed and Wisest ! can it be  
 That one exalted should seem pitiless ?  
 Nay let me lose such glory : for its sake  
 I would not leave one living thing I loved.’ ”  
 (*Indian Idylls*, 1883.)

See also *The Light of Asia* (1879) :

“ Then, craving leave, he spake  
 Of life, which all can take but none can give,  
 Life which all creatures love and strive to keep,  
 Wonderful, dear, and pleasant unto each,  
 Even to the meanest ; yea a boon to all  
 Where pity is, for pity makes the world  
 Soft to the weak and noble for the strong.  
 Unto the dumb lips of his flock he lent  
 Sad pleading words, showing how man, who prays  
 For mercy to the gods, is merciless,  
 Being as a god to those ; albeit all life  
 Is linked and kin, and what we slay have given  
 Meek tribute of the milk and wool, and set  
 Fast trust upon the hands which murder them. . . .”

MOTHER CAREY'S CHICKEN

“ I once, while wandering along the Norfolk coast, came upon a seagull crouched behind a boulder on the wet sand. It sat perfectly still, and did not seem to see me or hear me as I walked towards it along the shore. Having an intimate knowledge of seagulls and their ways, I was naturally astonished. . . .



Soon, however, I perceived that one of its wings lay spread upon the sand and that the feathers were dabbled with blood ; the wing was broken ; it had been shot by some fool, to shoot whom, as he pulled his Cockney trigger, would certainly have been no murder. I stooped down to inspect the bird more closely ; but still it did not heed me, but crouched, staring straight ahead, listening—listening to the music of the waves. I bent lower, and looked into its eyes. In them was an expression such as I had never seen in any seagull's eye before. Melancholy, unutterable sadness : how feeble seem these words to describe the expression in that seagull's eyes ! . It haunted me for years. The poor bird was blind—yes, a shot, striking it somewhere in the neck or head, paralysed the optic nerves of both eyes, and from the darkness it was listening to the beloved music of the sea." (From *The Life and Letters of T. Watts-Dunton*, by Thomas Hake and A. C. Rickett, London, 1916.)

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TO THE TORMENTOR

Among the many poets who have touched on this theme, two specially great names stand out—Robert Browning and Richard Wagner. Both gave forcible expression to their hatred of vivisection, the former in the well-known lines of *Tray*, the latter in the scathing sentences of his *Open Letter to Weber*.

Cp. also the vision of a Temple of Science in Robert Buchanan's *The City of Dream* (1888) :

"The hound drew back and struggled with the chain  
In act to fly, but every way dragged and driven  
He reached the lecturer's feet and there lay down  
Panting and looking up with pleading eyes ;  
The lecturer smiled again and patted him,  
When lo ! the victim licked the bloody hand  
Pleading for kindness and for pity still. . . ."

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AT A DOG'S GRAVE

Cp. the anonymous poem in the Greek Anthology *On a Favourite Dog* :

"Thou who passest on the path, if haply thou dost mark this monument, laugh not I pray thee, though it is a dog's grave ; tears fell for me, and the dust was heaped above me by a master's hands, who likewise engraved these words on

my tomb" (translated by J. W. Mackail, *The Greek Anthology*, 1911).

See also the beautiful lines on the hound Hodain in Swinburne's *Tristram of Lyonesse*, Book V. (1882).

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THE TOAD

One of the "Paraphrases from the French" in the author's *Poetical Works* (1914).

Cp. Victor Hugo's *Le Crapaud* (No. 53 in *La Légende des Siècles*).

See also Blunt's poem *Satan absolved* (1899), written, it is interesting to note, at the suggestion of Herbert Spencer. Of this great poem—which ought to be known to all humanitarians—the author records in his Diary (May 27, 1899): "I have finished *Satan Absolved* and feel more content with life as a consequence, having the sense of having done all I could, and having made my individual protest against the abominations of the Victorian Age" (*My Diaries*, Part I, London, 1919).

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THE PUZZLED GAME-BIRDS

Cp. the description of the deserted Tess's discovery of the mangled pheasants, left to die by the "shooting-party." (*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, XLI).

"She had occasionally caught glimpses of these men in girlhood looking over hedges, or peering through bushes, and pointing their guns, strangely accoutred, a bloodthirsty light in their eyes. She had been told that rough and brutal as they seemed just then, they were not like this all the year round, but were, in fact, quite civil persons save during certain weeks of autumn and winter, when like the inhabitants of the Malay Peninsula, they ran amuck, and made it their purpose to destroy life—in this case harmless, feathered creatures brought into being by artificial means solely to gratify these propensities—at once so unmannerly and so unchivalrous, towards their weaker fellows in Nature's teeming family. With the impulse of a soul that could feel for her kindred sufferers as much as for herself, Tess's first thought was to put the still living birds out of their torture, and to this end with her own hands she broke the necks of as many as she could find. . . . 'Poor darlings—to suppose myself the most miserable being on earth, and the sight o' such misery as yours!' she exclaimed, her tears running down as she killed the birds tenderly. . . ."

THE BLINDED BIRD

For another example of Thomas Hardy's tenderness and humane feeling towards animals, see the beautiful and intimately personal lines called *Afterwards*, in *Moments of Vision* (1917), the volume from which this poem is taken.

"If I pass during some nocturnal blackness, mothy and warm,  
When the hedgehog travels furtively over the lawn,  
Will they say, 'He strove that such innocent creatures should  
come to no harm,  
But he could do little for them; and now he is gone?'"

See also the letter in the *Humanitarian*, May, 1910, wherein he wrote:

"Few people seem to perceive fully as yet that the most far-reaching consequence of the establishment of the common origin of all species is ethical; that it logically involved a re-adjustment of altruistic morals, by enlarging, as a necessity of rightness, the application of what has been called "The Golden Rule" from the area of mere mankind to that of the whole animal kingdom. Possibly Darwin himself did not quite perceive it."

GOD EVOLVING

These fine lines by the Victorian agnostic are virtually a poetical restatement of Schopenhauer's much-criticized Ethic of Compassion. (See *Die Grundlage der Moral*, 1840, a treatise which devotes particular attention to the recognition of animals' rights as an integral part of morals.)

Cp. the Buddhist humane precept:

"As recking nought of self, a mother's love  
Enfolds and cherishes her only son,  
So through the world let thy compassion move  
And compass living creatures every one,  
Soaring and sinking in unfettered liberty  
Free from ill-will, purged of all enmity!"

(*Sutta Nipata* 148 and 149, translated by K. J. Saunders in *The Heart of Buddhism*, 1915.)

MAN WITH THE RED RIGHT HAND

Cp. the terrible indictment of man for his ruthless slaughter of wild life in Bjunt's *Satan Absolved* (1899), from which the following lines are taken :

"All pity is departed. Each once happy thing  
That on Thy fair earth went, how fleet of foot or wing,  
How glorious in its strength, how wondrous in design,  
How royal in its raiment tintured opaline, . . .  
Each one of them is doomed. From the deep central seas  
To the white Poles, Man ruleth pitiless Lord of these,  
And daily he destroyeth. The great whales he driveth  
Beneath the northern ice, and quarter none he giveth,  
Who perish there of wounds in their huge agony.  
He presseth the white bear on the white frozen sea  
And slaughtereth for his pastime. The wise amorotic seal  
He slayeth big with young; the walrus cubs that kneel  
But cannot turn his rage, alive he mangleth them,  
Leaveth in breathing heaps, outrooted branch and stem.  
In every land he slayeth."

See also Buchanan's poem *The Song of the Fur-Seal*.

MY CHAFFINCH

"Birds," wrote Jefferies in *The Life of the Fields*, "are lively and intellectual, imaginative and affectionate creatures." The steady growth of humanitarian feeling in Jefferies (in part actually recorded by himself) may be clearly and easily traced in his writings, from the early *Amateur Poacher* (1879) to the posthumously published *Nature and Eternity*. The latter is one of the finest and most characteristic of his essays, and also that in which he gives the fullest expression to his sympathy with "the creatures called 'lower'," and most clearly enunciates his creed of the kinship of all sentient life. Like Darwin he had come to believe that even insects have "une petite dose de raison."

VOICES OF THE VOICELESS

See also the author's *Animals' Rights* (revised edition, London, 1915) and his paper *Are Animals Dumb?* in *The Humanities of Diet* (1914), which also contains some of his admirable render-

ings of humane passages from the poems of Lucretius, Virgil, etc. Humanitarianism is not always associated with humour, but Salt's numerous witty and satirical pieces in verse and prose afford excellent proof, if it be needed, that the two things are thoroughly compatible.

Cp. also Shelley's

"From many a dale  
The antelopes who flocked for food have spoken  
With happy sounds and motions, that avail.  
Like man's own speech ;"

(*The Revolt of Islam*, X, 2.).

and Hebbel's *Diaries* (1862): "Animals possess the whole vocal gamut of emotional sensation in common with man—and that vocal gamut is the root of all language."

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THE SQUIRREL .

Cp. the charming description of the Squirrel in Cowper's *The Task* (Book VI), leading up to the poet's reflection there—

"That heart is hard in nature and unfit  
For human fellowship, as being void  
Of sympathy, and therefore dead alike  
To love and friendship both, that is not pleased  
With sight of animals enjoying life,  
Nor feels their happiness augment his own."

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THE LONDON SPARROW

Many readers will be grateful for the opportunity of reading this extremely interesting poem, which originally appeared in *Merry England*, a periodical of the eighties of last century, and is now for the first time completely reprinted. By the remarkable individuality and charm of his writings Mr. Hudson has probably done as much as any man living to bring about a more reasonable attitude in our outlook on wild animal life. It is unnecessary here to specify the numerous humanitarian passages in his books: an anthology might be made from them alone. But I may refer particularly to the beautiful prose-poem at the close of *A Tired Traveller* (in *Adventures among Birds*, 1912); the defence of so-called "faddists" and "senti-

mentalists" in *Afoot in England*; the essays in *Birds in a Village* and *Birds and Man*; and the various pamphlets written for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Mr. Hudson's *Birds in a Village* (1893) also contains a delightful passage on the London Sparrow.

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THE LIZARD

This and the succeeding piece are by the well-known American Socialist poet—the author of *The Sower* and *The Man with the Hoe*—who is keenly interested in the question of our relations to the animal world.

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THE ROYAL ASCETIC AND THE HIND

I have omitted some lines, consisting, however, merely of a moral tag added by the devout authoress, and not forming an integral part of the piece. Indeed the poem itself is in a sense only a fragment, for it is a close translation of part of Book II, chapter 13 of the *Vishnu Purāna* (accessible for English readers in the translation by H. H. Wilson, London, 1840). In that book it is related that as punishment for his "selfish affection," which interrupted his abstraction, the King, at his next birth, found himself a deer, with the faculty of remembering his previous life!

Hermits in all times and lands have, as is natural, lived on friendly terms with wild animals. A delightful chapter in Palladius's *Paradise of the Holy Fathers* (translated by E. W. Budge, 1907), which also contains the well-known story of St. Anthony and the lions, as told by St. Jerome, records that Abba Theon—a monk of the Thebaid—"used to go forth from his cell by night and mingle with the wild beasts of the desert, and give them to drink of the water which he found. The footmarks which appeared by the side of his abode were those of buffaloes, and goats and gazelles, in the sight of which he took great pleasure." Other instances of his fellowship will be found in the same work.

The first Act of Kalidasa's exquisite *Shakuntala* contains a charming picture of an Indian hermitage. The king is about to shoot a gazelle whom he is hunting, when the hermits stay his hand; and in proof of the sacred character of the grove

he points out to his charioteer the nesting parrots feeding their young, the fearless fawns playing close by, and

"the trustful deer  
That do not flee from us as we draw near."

In the beautiful scene of Shakuntala's leave-taking (Act IV), after begging her father, the hermit Kanva, to send her the good news "when the pregnant doe wandering about near the cottage becomes a mother," she stops suddenly, exclaiming: "Oh! Who is it that keeps tugging at my robe as if to hinder me?" to which the hermit replies:

"It is the fawn whose lips, when torn  
By kusha-grass, you soothed with oil,  
The fawn who gladly nibbled corn  
Held in your hand; with loving toil,  
You have adopted him, and he  
Would never leave you willingly."

Whereupon Shakuntala, addressing the fawn as "child" (as Hebbel records that he often used to call his squirrel), beseeches her father to be a mother to the orphaned creature.

(See *Shakuntala*, translated by A. W. Ryder, London, Dent & Co., 1912.)

Torn Dutt, the brilliant Hindu girl who wrote verse in English and French, died at the age of 21. Among her original English poems the ballad of *Sindhu*, founded on an old Indian legend, is particularly interesting, since, like *The Ancient Mariner*, it is the story of tragic expiation for the thoughtless slaughter of a bird.

A critical memoir of the poetess, by Edmund Gosse, prefaces her *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan* (London, 1882).

### Page 177

#### A RUNNABLE STAG

In spite of the concluding stanzas, and the delicious irony in the picture of those "three hundred gentlemen able to ride, three hundred horses as gallant and free" dauntlessly torturing a single sentient being to win their day's pleasure, this splendid poem, I am credibly informed, has been claimed by "sportsmen" as a hunting-song!

Exmoor deer seeking escape from their baiters by swimming out to sea are not always lucky enough to be drowned, however. Jefferies in his *Red Deer* gives a graphic description of a hunted

hind who was thrice chased back to shore by a *steamer*, and thus eventually slain.

Two other well-known English poems containing descriptions of a stag-hunt—though very different in tone—may be mentioned here. Both are of the eighteenth century, and were written about the same time. The first is James Thomson's *Autumn* (1730), in which the poet, after upbraiding

"the steady tyrant man,  
Who with the thoughtless insolence of power  
Inflamed, beyond the most infuriate wrath  
Of the worst monster that e'er roam'd the waste,  
For sport alone pursues the cruel chase . . ."

refers to the stag-hunters as "the inhuman rout," and urges those who plead some imaginary connection between bravery and hunting, to go and fight lions!

The other is Somervile's panegyric on hunting, *The Chase* (1735), the sportsman's poetical classic even to-day, and still refusing to read, though mainly on account of the author's totally unconscious humour! It was frequently reprinted during last century, the latest edition, charmingly illustrated, being dated 1896. The third Book contains a fine picture of a royal stag-hunt at Windsor. The one point where the sportsman Somervile agrees with his rival the humanitarian Thomson, is, curiously enough, in his description of the terror of the agonized beast:

"Now the blown stag thro' woods, bogs, roads and streams,  
Has measur'd half the forest; but alas!  
He flies in vain, he flies not from his fears.  
Tho' far he cast the ling'ring pack behind,  
His haggard fancy still with horror views  
The fell destroyer; still the fatal cry  
Insults his ears, and wounds his trembling heart."

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#### THE CABHORSE

The cabhorse is also one of the protagonists of a remarkable poem, *Die Drei Pferde*, by the Swiss peasant poet Alfred Huggenberger (in *Die Stille der Felder*, Leipzig, 1913). Another piece by Haraucourt, *Le Loup* (translated by Payne in *Flowers of France*), is an interesting poetical variation on the theme of Francis and the wolf of Agobio.



THE DEER AND THE PROPHET

Based on an old Afghan ballad by Naḡir, which may be found, together with a literal French version, in the *Chants populaires des Afghans* (Paris, 1888-90) collected by Professor James Darmesteter. A more literal verse rendering will be found in E. Martinengo-Cesaresco's interesting book *The Place of Animals in Human Thought* (London, 1909).

THE SKYLARKS

The following extract from the Journal of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (Christmas, 1916) forms a depressing commentary on this poem: "An article in the *Daily News* on the thriving and extravagant Christmas trade of Islington, has the following paragraph: 'Another sign of the times to make the reflective pause was the crowd thronging round a busy merchant who had a big bath full of larks for sale. They were live larks, very woebegone and dreadfully frightened. The bath was netted over the top to prevent their escape, and from time to time the presiding naturalist would plunge his hand in through a hole in the netting, grab a fluttering bird by the wing or the leg, haul it out and cry: "Buy, buy, buy! Here y'are! finest songsters, and only a tanner apiece. Buy, buy, buy!" He found a ready sale. The purchasers wrapped them up in knotted handkerchiefs and carried them joyfully home.' In face of this continuous torture of wild birds in the Saturday and Sunday markets—birds netted, prisoned, suffocated, terrified, and with a fate perhaps happiest if they die in the knotted handkerchief, we are pleased to call ourselves a humane nation."

OF ST. FRANCIS AND THE ASS

See also Mrs. Hinkson's poems *St. Francis and the Birds*, *St. Francis and the Wolf*, and *St. Columba and the Horse* (in *Poems*, 1901).

Notwithstanding the mass of more modern literature which has gathered round the wonderful personality of the Saint, Renan's general statement of Francis's conception of the Universal Kinship still remains one of the clearest and best, and may be quoted here:

“That great mark of a mind free from commonplace pedantry, affection for animals and sympathy with them, was stronger in him than in any other man. Far removed from the brutality of the false spiritualism of the Cartesians, he only acknowledged one sort of life; he recognized degrees in the scale of being, but no sudden interruptions; like the sages of India he could not admit the false classification which places man on one side, and on the other those thousand forms of life of which we see only the outside, and in which, though our eyes detect only uniformity, there may be infinite diversity. For Francis Nature had but one voice.” (E. Renan, *Studies in Religious History*, London, 1886.)

Cp. also Wordsworth's lines on Francis in the *Memorials of a Tour in Italy* (1837).

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#### THE HEDDIE-SPARROWS

This piece, by the author of the well-known *Songs of the Army of the Night*, is from a forgotten volume of *Poetical Works* originally printed in Brisbane in 1887. I have slightly altered the title.

The sentiment of the poem recalls that wonderful old Irish lament dating from the eleventh century A.D., translated by Professor Kuno Meyer in his *Selections from Ancient Irish Poetry* (London, Constable & Co., 1913) under the title of *The Deserted Home*, which should be read by all who love birds or appreciate noble poetry:

“Sadly talks the blackbird here,  
Well I know the woe he found:  
No matter who cut down his nest,  
For its young it was destroyed.”

Thy heart, O blackbird, burnt within  
At the deed of reckless man:  
Thy nest bereft of young and egg  
The cowherd deems a trifling tale.

At thy clear notes they used to come,  
Thy new-fledged children from afar;  
No bird now comes from out their house,  
Across its edge the nettle grows.

They murdered them, the cowherd lads,  
All thy children in one day :  
One the fate to me and thee,  
My own children live no more."

Page 192

ARMISTICE

Cp. Auguste Gaud's pastoral *La Tristesse des Bœufs* (translated by John Payne in *Flowers of France*), a poem which, both in feeling and expression, inevitably recalls the paintings of Millet.

Page 193

TO MY 'CAT

Cp. Baudelaire's *Le Chat* (*Les Fleurs du Mal*, No. 51) :

"Quand mes yeux, vers ce chat que j'aime  
Tirés comme par un aimant  
Se retournent docilement  
Et que je regarde en moi-même,

„ Je vois avec étonnement  
Le feu de ses prunelles pâles,  
Clairs fanaux, vives opaques,  
Qui me contèplent fixement."

Page 198

PRISONER OF CARISBROOKE

*Green Arras* (1896), the author's first volume of poems, from which this is taken, also contains *The Great Ride*, a fierce protest against the maltreatment of horses under the plea of "military necessity" ; while his latest, *The Heart of Peace* (1918) includes an elegy which is thoroughly Franciscan in spirit—the tender half-humorous lines on the friend of the Paris sparrows, *Henri Pol : bird-lover*.

One of the finest of Housman's many tales is that called *The Truce of God*, which tells of a Hermit and his friendship with the wild beasts. This will be found in *All-Fellows : Seven Legends* (1896).

Page 201

PITIFUL

This poem faithfully reflects the spirit, and to some extent even sums up the ideas of the author's various humanitarian writings published during the last few years, such as *Sport* (in *A Commentary*, 1908), *Memories* (1914), and the *Papers on our Treatment of Animals* (in *A Sheaf*, 1916).

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THE THRUSH IN SEVEN DIALS.

See also the author's poem *A Bird in the Hand*:

"Oh for a Priest of the Birds to arise  
Wonderful words on his lips that persuade  
Reasoning creatures to leave to the skies  
Song at its purest, a-throb in the glade."

Page 209

MY DOG

These characteristically simple lines by the devout poet of Orthez carry us back more than two thousand years to the episode of Yudisthira and his dog in the *Mahabharata*. (See note to page 115).

Cp. Lamartine's apostrophe to his dog:

"No! when thy love by death shall be o'erthrown  
It will revive, and in some heaven unknown!

We shall love on as we were wont to love—  
Instinct and soul is one to him above!  
Where friendship sheds o'er love its honoured name,  
Where nature lights a pure and hallowed flame,  
God will no more extinguish his soft light  
That shines not brighter in the stars of night  
Than in the faithful spaniel's anxious eye."  
(*Jocelyn*, 9th epoch; English translation 1844.)

It seems probable indeed, that ever since heaven was invented men have from time to time thus sought to smuggle their animal friends into it! Moslems even admit to the highest heaven a select circle of famous animals—among them the dog of the Seven Sleepers. (See also the note to page 49.)

In her excellent book *Six French Poets* (New York, 1915)

Amy Lowell writes : " Jammes loves all animals. . . . Since the days when as a child the shooting of a monkey at Pau set him trembling, he has suffered with them, and for them :

" la vision du Singe qu'on fusille  
Tu le sais bien, elle est toujours en moi."

His dog figures often in his poems. There are many creatures in his books : cats, kingfishers, larks, butterflies. He has sung of wasps, their humming, their flight, when they seem like golden balls. La Fontaine's rabbit, the beasts who followed St. Francis of Assisi, and those with whom Crusoe consoled himself on his island, Jammes has loved them and written about them all."

One of the most fragrant and delicate of his books, *Pensée des Jardins*, contains seven poems called " Some Donkeys."

The two translations which I have been able to include in this volume, are admirably successful in reproducing the essential Jammesian simplicity.

Page 222

STUPIDITY STREET

Longfellow's well-known narrative poem *The Birds of Killingworth* treats the same theme. It is interesting to note that despite the poems of Shelley and Meredith and the rest, not only is a caged skylark a common town sight, but rows of these " ethereal minstrels'" corpses may still be seen during " the season" strung up in the meat shops of Leadenhall Market, London—for human food !

Page 223

IN THE " ZOO "

This piece by an American writer is taken from *Scribner's Magazine*, July 1914 (Copyright 1914, by Charles Scribner's Sons).

Cp. *The Captive Stork* by Janos Arany (1847-82), one of the greatest of Hungarian writers, a poem which depicts with exquisite pathos the hopeless misery of captivity for a migratory bird.

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